Behind the Myth of the Land-Grant University: Recognizing a Legacy of Land Theft at the University of Minnesota

A Case Study in Corporate Historical Responsibility

Capstone Research and Planning Report

—

Claire Huber
Strategic Communication M.A. Program
University of Minnesota
16 June, 2021

Table of Contents

Introduction

Since her inauguration in 2019, University of Minnesota's President, Joan Gabel, has initiated meetings with Tribal leaders from the 11 American Indian Tribal Nations[1] that share Minnesota boundaries, a courtesy rarely--if ever--extended by previous University presidents (personal interview, April 8, 2021). Her outreach is part of the University's system-wide strategic plan to create more equitable futures for students and build better Tribal-University relations (University Relations News Service, 2021). On March 16, 2020, in an emailed statement to *the Minnesota Daily* regarding the potential for a University of Minnesota Twin-Cities Land Acknowledgement*,* Gabel stated, "it is important to acknowledge the people on whose land we live, learn and work as we seek to improve and strengthen our relations with our tribal nations," (Rademacher and Miettienen, 2020). Despite these nascent relationship building efforts on behalf of the University, not three months later, on July 8, 2020, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) published several resolutions demanding immediate action from the University. In its press release, MIAC credited President Gabel for initiating greater outreach but ultimately called upon the University of Minnesota (UMN; the U) to "acknowledge past injustices and exploitation of Native American people and lands," (MIAC, 2020, page 1).

The disconnect between President Gabel's efforts and MIAC's resolutions lies partly in the misremembered myth of the University of Minnesota's establishment as a public land-grant university in 1862. Equitable futures and better Tribal-University relations are impossible to achieve without remembering and recognizing how the University of Minnesota benefited not just from the displacement and dispossession of virtually every American Indian tribe in the state, but from the state sanctioned violence against American Indians that made this displacement and dispossession possible. Nearly 170 years later, the death and bloodshed that made way for the University's establishment goes

[1] "American Indian" is used throughout this paper to refer to the Indigenous (non-Pacific Islander, non-Alaskan Native) population of the United States. This decision was made based upon the way those interviewed for this project referred to themselves and their communities. "American Indian" is a controversial term, and any work that involves Indigenous people should consider how the individual or community would like to be referred to.

unrecognized and unremembered by most of the University of Minnesota's campus and larger Minnesota community. The American Indian community, however, refuses to forget.

In the press release announcing MIAC's resolutions, Robert Larson, MIAC Board Chair and President of Lower Sioux Indian Community was quoted saying, "we are living in a moment in time when institutions and organizations everywhere are re-examining their practices and past deeds through a lens of racial awakening," (MIAC, 2020, page 1). Larson speaks to a wider trend in public discourse. With more attention turned towards diversity, equity, and inclusion, the original public land-grant universities--all 52 of them--are facing increased pressure to address their legacies of violence against American Indians. In other words, the University of Minnesota's painful past isn't unique to the U. Its legacy is shared with 52 other universities from coast to coast and is part of the larger period of problematic American history defined by Manifest Destiny and the colonization of the American West.

Despite increasing public pressure, most universities are struggling to confront and reconcile their legacies of violence and dispossession of American Indians. Some public land-grant universities in the modern era have resorted to whitewashing their histories, omitting, and denying darker details about their university's founding. Others have a legacy of "forgetting", as well as a reverence towards tradition; a lack of accountability among present-day senior leaders who do not see themselves as being responsible for their university's past mistakes; and/or a tension between modern day issues that are deemed as more pressing than issues of the past. But, for universities like the University of Minnesota to incorporate justice and equity initiatives effectively and permanently into their campuses, and for key stakeholders to see these initiatives as authentic and genuine, it is imperative that universities tackle their harmful legacies and develop strategies to ensure they never happen again.

This capstone project, which benefited immensely from the research on public land-grant universities conducted by Robert Lee and Tristan Ahtone for High Country News, is rooted in the theory of Corporate Historical Responsibility (CHR) and attempts to understand modern day barriers towards

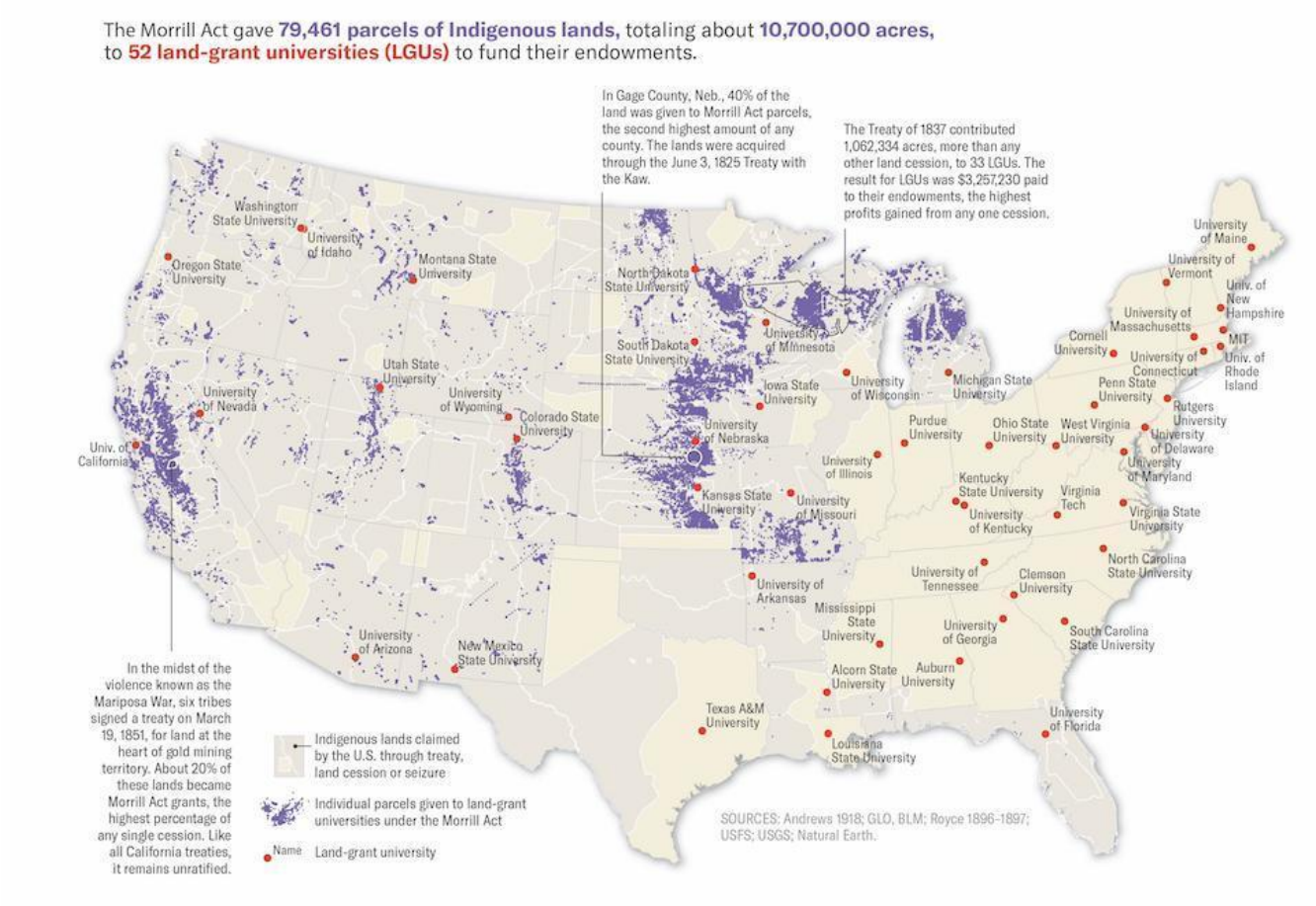
land-grant legacy recognition and provide recommendations to overcome them. To fully inform the recommendations, this paper will first explore the history of the Land-Grant Act, using the University of Minnesota as a case study. Guided by Dr. Claudia Janssen's Four Principles of Corporate Historical Responsibility (Janssen, 2013), this paper will then conduct an audit of the University of Minnesota's current attempts to create a relationship with American Indian students and community. From there, communications recommendations will be examined, and finally, the paper will conclude with recommendations for other public land-grant universities that wish to implement a Corporate Historical Responsibility strategy on their own campuses.

Background

America's first public universities were born out of the Morrill Land-Grant Act, signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln in 1862. The Land-Grant Act provided each state with parcels of federally controlled lands that could be used or sold off to build or financially stabilize institutions of higher learning (Gavazzi, 2020). The legislation was designed to "aid economic development by broadening access to higher education for the nation's farmhands and industrial classes" (Lee and Ahtone, 2020, page 1). Nearly 160 years later, land-grant universities make up some of the most prominent schools in the country: Cornell, MIT, Penn State, Texas A&M, University of California, and the University of Minnesota are just a handful of public universities that benefited from the legislation. The act redistributed 10.7 million acres, approximately 80,000 parcels of land, across 24 states from coast-to-coast, establishing endowments for 52 institutions (Lee and Ahtone, 2020).

For many land-grant universities, the Morrill Act--guised as a donation to the American people--is part of their creation story, celebrating the edification of the untamed American West. However, behind these origin stories is a very dark truth: the Morrill Act expropriated land from 250 tribes, bands, and communities through government-sponsored, violent land cessions and unfair treaties

(Lee and Ahtone, 2020). For all 10.7 million acres, the U.S. government paid less than $400,000 and “not a single dollar was paid for more than a quarter of the parcels that supplied the grants...land confiscated through outright seizure or by treaties that were never ratified by the federal government” (Lee and Ahtone, 2020, page 2).



Land-grant Universities Across the U.S. *Used with permission from High Country News (Margaret Pearce, 2020)*

By the early 20th century, the grants raised “$17.7 million for university endowments, with unsold lands valued at an additional $5.1 million” (Lee and Ahtone, 2020, page 2). Today, these land-grant parcels have a current estimated value of approximately half a billion dollars ($500,000,000) when adjusted for inflation (Gavazzi, 2020). The Morrill Act built a framework for legacy into the

legislation, requiring “all money made from land sales [to] be used in perpetuity, meaning those funds still remain on university ledgers to this day” (Lee and Ahtone, 2020, page 2). Likewise, the location of nearly all the land obtained and sold, the treaties, and the endowments made with the profits of these land seizures is known and recorded, which lays the groundwork for the leaders of virtually every single land-grant university to develop and implement strategies around reparations, contrition, and recognition.

University of Minnesota: A Dark Founding

While there were several treaties designated as Morrill Land-Grant land starting as early as 1830, perhaps the most significant land-grant treaty is the Dakota Cession in Minnesota (see map in Appendix A). In 1851, four Dakota bands signed treaties, now known as the Dakota Cession, which relinquished nearly all Dakota territory in the state in response to government sanctioned coercion through “withholding of rations, the threat of violence, enforced starvation, the killing of game, and the destruction of agriculture” (Lee and Ahtone, 2020, page 8). Not long after the Dakota Cession treaties were signed, they were changed by the United States Congress to delay annuity payments to the four tribes for the land. This land would later become the home of the University of Minnesota’s flagship campus.

The founding of the University of Minnesota is also directly tied to the mass execution and expulsion of the Dakota people. Ten years after the Dakota Cession treaties were signed, some of the Dakota, fed up with mistreatment from white settlers and being relegated to agriculturally unviable land, decided to try to fight for and reclaim their land. The Governor of Minnesota, Alexander Ramsey, authorized the U.S. Army to put an end to the so-called “Dakota War'' through the “extermination or exile of the Dakotas” (Lee and Ahtone, 2020, page 8). Not long after the Dakota War began in 1862, President Lincoln authorized “the largest mass execution in U.S. history” (Lee and Ahtone, 2020, page 8), authorizing the hanging of 38 Dakota men for their participation in the insurrection. Shortly after,

Congress annulled the Dakota Cession treaties entirely and expelled the Dakota people from the state. Not 35 days later, Governor Ramsey claimed a Morrill Act land-grant for the state of Minnesota, 98% of which was territory ceded by the Dakota (page 8).

The 145 square miles of Dakota land, which was purchased for less than 2.4 cents per acre was appraised by land agents to be worth between $5 and $10 per acre. The land was divided into 300 parcels and was spread across 18 counties (page 8), and quickly generated $580,000 or the equivalent of $10.5 million today (page 8). This endowment was officially assigned in 1868 to financially stabilize the University of Minnesota, which had temporarily closed during the Civil War. Without the land-grant endowment, the University of Minnesota would not exist as we know it today. According to High Country's report on land-grant universities, "for every dollar the United States claims to have spent to purchase Dakota title, the Morrill Act heaped $250 into the University of Minnesota's coffers--a return of 250 to 1" (page 9). The University of Minnesota's endowment is currently valued at $3.2 billion (University of Minnesota Foundation, 2021).

University of Minnesota - Morris

Nearly twenty years after the University of Minnesota received its endowment and re-opened its doors, a very different kind of school was being constructed on Anishinaabe and Dakota/Lakota land in Morris, Minnesota. From 1887 to 1909, the Sisters of Mercy order of the Catholic Church, and the U.S Bureau of Indian Affairs administered the Morris Industrial School for American Indians (University of Minnesota - Morris, n.d.), which was designed to assimilate Native Americans to European culture. American Indian boarding schools played a significant role in the "destruction and vilification of Native culture, language, family, and spirituality" (Pember, 2019), separating young children from their families and their indigenous cultures and Native languages. A recent Atlantic article puts the true violence of these schools into perspective:

> *This is what achieving civilization looked like in practice: Students were stripped of all things associated with Native life. Their long hair, a source of pride for many Native peoples, was cut short, usually into identical bowl haircuts. They exchanged traditional clothing for uniforms and embarked on a life influenced by strict military-style regimentation. Students were physically punished for speaking their Native languages. Contact with family and community members was discouraged or forbidden altogether. Survivors have described a culture of pervasive physical and sexual abuse at the schools. Food and medical attention were often scarce; many students died. Their parents sometimes learned of their death only after they had been buried in school cemeteries, some of which were unmarked (Pember, 2019).*

In 1909, the Morris Industrial School closed, and the lands and buildings were transferred to the state of Minnesota (Gregory, 2020) along with a stipulation that “the institution of learning be maintained'' and that “Indian pupils be admitted free of charge for tuition and on terms of equality with white pupils” (University of Minnesota - Morris, n.d.). Upon the transfer of the lands to the state, the University of Minnesota developed an agricultural school that operated until 1960, when the University of Minnesota - Morris campus formally replaced the school. With the formalization of the University of Minnesota - Morris campus, the tuition requirement is carried on.

University of Minnesota - Duluth

The University of Minnesota - Duluth resides on land that was ceded by the Anishinaabeg/Ojibwe/Chippewa in an 1854 treaty. The land has a legacy of being cared for by Native people--before the Ojibwe, the Dakota and Northern Cheyenne called this land home (University of Minnesota - Duluth Land Acknowledgement, 2019).

American Indians and the University of Minnesota Today

Today, the University of Minnesota system now boasts five distinct campuses: Crookston, Duluth, Morris, Rochester, and Twin Cities (the flagship campus). The University of Minnesota's mission, last amended in 2008, reads, "founded in the belief that all people are enriched by understanding, is dedicated to the advancement of learning and the search for truth; to the sharing of this knowledge through education for a diverse community; and to the application of this knowledge to benefit the people of the state, the nation, and the world" (University of Minnesota, 2008). Despite the expansion of the University system and a mission that seemingly holds truth and knowledge in high regard, the University has *never* facilitated discussions with key stakeholders about its founding or who the land on which it operates belonged to.

The University of Minnesota's violent founding, paired with silence about its problematic legacy, laid the foundation for many other troubling episodes. For example, in the 1950's, the University of Minnesota Medical School conducted research for the United State Army "involving experimentation on Red Lake children without parental knowledge, causing the children to get nephritis**"** (MIAC, 2021). Similarly, the University attempted to replicate the DNA of wild rice, a sacred food of the Anishinaabe people, without involvement of the tribal governments (MIAC, 2021). And, after failing to comply with a federal law for nearly 30 years, the University of Minnesota has only recently agreed to consider returning Native American funerary objects, including human remains, to the communities from which they were taken--but only once they are finished being inventoried, which is not expected to be completed until 2025 (MIAC, 2021; Most, 2020). These are just a few examples of the wrong doings that have been made public. The likelihood of other similar wrongdoings by the University is high, those wrongdoings just haven't been made public yet.

Sharing geography with Minnesota today, there are 11 federally recognized tribal nations, and about 168,465 people who identify as Native American--approximately 1% of the state's overall

population (Minnesota Compass, n.d.). Approximately 80% of American Indian/Alaskan Native people live outside of federally designated reservations (Office of Minority Health, 2017). The University of Minnesota ‘s uneven response to the historical wrongdoings perpetrated against Native Americans is alarming and heartbreaking when considering the low socio-economic indicators of Native Americans in Minnesota--which can be directly traced back to land seizures and American Indian boarding schools throughout the 1800’s and 1900’s. Consider the following:

- Minnesota’s median household income is $68,000; for American Indian families in the state, it’s $37,000; poverty rates (28.6%) among American Indians are among the highest of any racial or ethnic group in Minnesota (Kaul, 2018).
- Native American youth in Minnesota have the lowest graduation rates in the state: 51%, compared to 88% for white students (Kaul, 2018).
- Nation-wide, 19% of Native American 18–24-year-olds are enrolled in higher education and the six-year graduation rate is less than 40%--the lowest of any racial or ethnic group (Gregory, 2020).
- Fewer than 10% of adults from Dakota and Anishinaabe communities in Minnesota have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher (Gregory, 2020).

Theoretical Framework: Corporate Historical Responsibility

The University of Minnesota, which financially benefited from the Morrill Act and the dispossession of American Indians, has taken steps in recent years to begin building a relationship with the 11 federally recognized native tribes sharing boundaries with Minnesota. In the past year, the University of Minnesota made several announcements and set several projects in motion to build relationships with the tribes, which offers a case study in Corporate Historical Responsibility.

Corporate Historical Responsibility (CHR) is a relatively new concept within advocacy and issue management discourse that serves as an extension of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Corporate Social Responsibility assumes that corporations, as members of society, have moral obligations and social responsibilities in addition to the economic (i.e., earning profits) and legal (i.e., adhering to policies, laws, and regulations) obligations that have defined corporations since their origins in the late 1700s (Beal, 2013). Since the 1950's, when CSR first emerged in Howard R. Bowen's *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman* (Carroll, 1999), corporations have steadily been called to "contribute to the greater good of society and to be accountable for their actions" (Janssen, 2013, page 69). A well-researched CSR strategy is now critical for corporations to establish and maintain legitimacy (Schrempf-Stirling, 2016), maintain a positive legacy (Philips, 2019), adapt to changing societal expectations, and to prevent crises in the modern era (Brown, 2008).

Corporate Historical Responsibility (CHR) extends a corporation's moral obligations to include acknowledging and rectifying problematic corporate history (Janssen, 2013). Just as corporations are held accountable for present day impacts, it is also becoming increasingly common for corporations to be subject to public pressure and criticism regarding their ties to historical injustices (Phillips, 2019). Put another way: through CSR, corporations have social responsibilities in response to their *current* impact on society; through CHR, corporations have historical responsibilities to address *past* wrongdoings. CHR presents an opportunity for corporations to (re)legitimize their "social license to operate" (van der Meer and Jonkman, 2021, page 1) by addressing historical wrongdoing or past behavior that may have been socially acceptable at the time but is now seen as problematic in today's cultural contexts. Like CSR, CHR can also serve as a "proactive measure in the absence of crisis" (Janssen, 2013) positioning a corporation in a positive light, allowing them to generate goodwill and a positive brand persona.

From a marketing and management standpoint, history and legacy are commonly used to tell a brand's story, maintain a corporate image, or to establish legitimacy (Phillips, 2019). Corporations rarely

bring up historical wrongdoing within their own brand stories, and struggle to respond when problematic history resurfaces. Most commonly past wrongdoings are re-exposed through legal battles and activist movements, and as a result, corporations often feel forced to take a defensive position “directed at image protection and closure” (Janssen, 2013, page 78). Corporations typically situate their responses “within the traditional realm of crisis communication without reflection on the broader contexts'' (Janssen, 2013, page 65). Therefore, a crisis communications strategy typically doesn’t work because historical issues differ from present day corporate crises: they transcend immediate responsibility, are situated within the rapidly changing social and cultural mores and require a collective process of coming to terms with the past (Janssen, 2013).

CHR presents an alternative to this self-defense strategy and gives organizations an approach to address legacy issues ethically and authentically. Viewed as an extension of CSR, CHR integrates history into a corporation’s present day corporate responsibility efforts by directly tying how well the corporation addresses their past to their current CSR efforts (Spiliotis, 2006). As a result, CHR goes “beyond a narrow concern with the good or bad nature of corporate history” to include ways to address legacy issues in the present and over the long-term (Janssen, 2013, page 69).

Renewal and Reconciliation

At the center of CHR are two key concepts: renewal and reconciliation. Renewal discourse is a theory in crisis communications that emphasizes “renewal and growth over issues of blame, responsibility, and liability” (Ulmer, 2002, page 361). Renewal discourse emphasizes shared values, optimism, and opportunities for learning, as well as relationship (re)building and restoration with stakeholders (Veil et. al, 2011) and encourages the commemoration of the past and a communicated “prospective vision” for the future (Veil et. al, 2011). Renewal plays a significant role in CHR because it gives corporations an alternative to a defensive response when faced with a historical crisis.

Whereas renewal is the theoretical foundation for CHR, reconciliation is the communication process through which CHR is achieved, which involves "groups divided by past injustice--victims and perpetrators--[initiating] discourse and [working] to come to terms with the past" (Janssen, 2013, page 67). Reconciliation, while broad in its applications, has two key characteristics:

- **Dominant narrative disruption through dialogue**: Reconciliation requires a dialogue about the past. There may be disagreements or controversies around the legacy issue, but, nonetheless, the issues are being discussed (Doxtader, 2009). As a result, the dominant narratives that are upheld and perpetuated by organizational memory and culture are flagged as being historically inaccurate or unjust narratives. This may be controversial, and might be difficult for the corporation to recognize, but the controversy is deliberate because it opens the door for conversation (Doxtader, 2009).
- **Remembrance and acknowledgement:** When historical injustice is brought to the surface, it often directly contradicts the collective memory of society (Janssen, 2013). Accounting for and acknowledging historical injustice is often the first step in showing respect to those individuals, groups, communities, etc. who suffered harm or injustice at the hands of the organization in the past. Remembrance is key to reconciliation because without it, it is impossible to "inform and enable commitments to a present and future, in which past atrocities cannot occur again" (Janssen, 2013, page 68)

It is important to note that in interviews with American Indian stakeholders, it became clear that the word "reconciliation" is a term that comes with "lots of baggage" (personal communication, April 19, 2021), and isn't appropriate in this case study. Reconciliation, defined as "the restoration of *friendly* relations" (Merriam Webster, n.d.), does not adequately capture university/tribal relations, which was never a friendly relationship. For the purposes of this project, the process through which the victims and the perpetrators come to terms with the past will be referred to as "recognition" which is defined as

acknowledgment of something's existence, validity, or legality (Merriam Webster, n.d.), and more indicative of what future university/tribal relations could look like.

The Principles of CHR

In *Corporate Historical Responsibility (CHR): Addressing a Corporate Past of Forced Labor at Volkswagen,* Claudia Janssen developed the Four Principles of CHR, which are helpful when examining the U's modern-day responses to historical wrong doings.

1. **CHR demands respect for victims and their descendants:** This principle is oriented around the concept of forgetting as violence, and the importance of "affirming and honoring victims' suffering and recollections" (Janssen, 2013, page 70). It requires key stakeholders to engage in remembrance discourse respectfully, "and requires tact and sensitivity, focusing on the needs and concerns of victims, and embracing the memory of the past" (Janssen, 2013, page 70).
2. **CHR requires an attitude of remorse:** Remorse can be expressed through an "apology, reparations, seeking forgiveness, and an assurance to change" (Janssen, 2013, page 70). Publicly acknowledging remorse is a critical step in CHR because it "affirms what happened and acknowledges that fundamental rights were violated" (Janssen, 2013, page 70). Without regret and remorse, it is difficult for key stakeholders to believe the organization has changed or can be trusted. Consequently, "remorse is a necessary stance to potentially redefine relationships and to position the organization as a corporation that has changed" (Janssen, 2013, page 70).
3. **CHR demands accountability for corporate history:** According to Janssen (2013, page 70), "accountability is commonly defined as answerability". An organization is deemed "accountable" when it is transparent about its past, present, and future actions, opening itself up to judgement and, potentially, consequences. Janssen (2013, page 70) also notes, "if a corporation wants to

practice CHR, it thus needs to be able and willing to provide and share information about the bad parts of its own history."

4. **CHR demands commitments to justice in the present and future:** For organizations to make effectual strides in recognizing their past, they must also make changes to the "character and structures that had allowed the past atrocities to occur" (Janssen, 2013, page 70). The organization must focus on defining, instating, and affirming values and principles that have been breached in the past (Janssen, 2013), and use remedying a problematic corporate past as an opportunity to "inform social commitments to the present and future" (Janssen, 2013, page 70).

In the next section, this paper will conduct an audit of the University of Minnesota's current American Indian "recognition" efforts using the Four Principles of CHR to assess the University's actions through a historical lens. The audit will reveal how well the university is working to remedy its damaging legacy as a land-grant university into its modern-day programs, policies, staff positions, and marketing materials.

Findings

The University of Minnesota is a large system of universities: across 5 campuses, the school serves over 75,000+ students, faculty, and staff. As with most large institutions, the U moves slowly in response to issues, gets bogged down easily with bureaucratic processes, and struggles with timely system-wide changes, especially related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Social Responsibility (personal interview, April 1, 2021). Over the past several decades, the University of Minnesota has attempted to create a less hostile, more supportive learning environment for Native students, faculty, and staff without acknowledging the larger legacy issues or consulting with the 11 American Indian tribes.

Strengths	Weaknesses
- A president who sees Native American recognition as a priority - Development of new staff positions - Evidence of positive waiver-based higher-education outcomes for American Indian students - Mellon grant; TRUTH task force - Land acknowledgement precedence - Advisory council precedence	- High turnover in leadership; difficult when the priorities are set by the President - Reliant on state dollars; desire to align with state legislature, which is slow to push back against the status quo - Institutional lack of awareness about land-grant history; American Indian history - Community-wide lack of awareness about land-grant history; American Indian history - Bureaucracy; slow to respond to issues
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Cultural climate; people are ready and willing to talk about DEI and how to make changes - U of MN students are incredibly involved; easily bought into changes that would make the campus more inclusive/less problematic - Individual donors (pro-DEI) - Relationship building with Native groups; tribes want to be involved in U of MN decision making	- The loss of state funding - Individual donors (anti-DEI; too "politically correct") - Uneducated response/action plan - Not just a DEI issue but a political one, as well, related to tribal sovereignty and self-determination - Landback movement

Because the University of Minnesota has not consulted with American Indians, it has failed to realize that acknowledgment of the University's past is a critical component of any Native-student support measures in the present (personal interview, April 1, 2021; personal interview, April 8, 2021; and personal interview, April 19, 2021). As a result, the attempts to support the Native campus community stem from a concern for modern day social disadvantages, without considering or recognizing the historical wrongdoings that contributed to these disadvantages. This has resulted, as one University of Minnesota-Morris professor put it, in "piecemeal" attempts to recognize past harm and build relationships with American Indians across the University system (personal communication, March 24, 2021). To demonstrate this further, six components of the University of Minnesota's American

Indian-related work are examined for alignment with the Four Principles of Corporate Historical Responsibility:

“About Us” History Web Pages

The University of Minnesota - Twin Cities’ History web page provides a 170-year timeline highlighting important dates in the campus’ history (see Appendix B). In the 1862 entry, the timeline reads “Morrill Land-Grant Colleges Act signed, establishing federal land-grant resources for schools that teach and research agriculture and mechanical arts,” (University of Minnesota, n.d.). It is not until 1969 that American Indians are mentioned and never once is the ceded land mentioned within the U’s telling of history.

The way the University of Minnesota-Morris positions its relationship to the Morris Industrial Boarding School on its website is also interesting (see Appendix B). The history is presented in 3 Acts: Act I: American Indian Boarding School, 1887–1909; Act II: West Central School of Agriculture, 1910–63; Act III: University of Minnesota Morris, 1960–present. In “Act 1”, while the boarding school and tuition waivers are acknowledged there is no information about the forced assimilation that occurred there, and it lacks a clear explanation about why the tuition waiver exists. According to one University of Minnesota-Morris professor, the signage meant to provide historical background and context of certain campus buildings is equally opaque (personal interview, March 24, 2021).

The University of Minnesota-Duluth does a better job including their problematic history within the narrative of the school’s About Us section, although it is mostly worded as a Land Acknowledgement, which is discussed in the next section.

Corporate Historical Responsibility (CHR) Audit: About Us Web Pages

About Us - History Web Pages			
Respect for victims and their descendants	**An attitude of remorse**	**Accountability for corporate history**	**Commitments to justice in the present and future**
Virtually no acknowledgment of past harm, history of land cessions, and no mention of American Indian relations.	No mention of an apology or remorse.	No acknowledgement of historical ties to dispossession or where/how the U got its land.	None.
X	**X**	**X**	**X**

Land Acknowledgements

A land acknowledgement is "a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories" (Northwestern University, n.d.). Critics of land acknowledgments says they are nothing more than symbolic, and that they are attractive to universities and other institutions because they don't threaten their interests (Small, 2020). Others argue land acknowledgements are a critical first step in the recognition process--they are a demonstration of remembrance and acknowledgment that is required to build a relationship and develop a dialogue (Small, 2020). The University of Minnesota-Duluth is the only campus in the University of Minnesota system with a formal land acknowledgement (shown in Appendix C), which was crafted in a collaboration with the local tribes as well as the "Department of American Indian Studies, the Campus Climate Leadership Team, Campus Climate Change Team, and participants at the 2019 Summit on Equity, Race, & Ethnicity" (University of Minnesota - Duluth Land Acknowledgement, 2019). In June 2019, the statement was officially endorsed by the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (Bergstrom, 2019). Jill Doerfler, a professor and head of the American Indian Studies department at University of Minnesota-Duluth, said "the 1854 treaty is, in fact,

the treaty that gives the rights for Americans to be here, so it's super important for everyone to understand their rights. [These treaties] often are seen in dominant society as something that is about rights for American Indians. The treaties are, in fact American Indian nations giving rights to the U.S. It's sort of the opposite of what most people have, a kind of false understanding of how treaties work" (quoted in Bergstrom, 2019).

In March 2020, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities said it plans to offer a similar land acknowledgement. According to the Minnesota Daily, Tadd Johnson, the senior director of University of Minnesota-American Indian Tribal Nations Relations, stated that he hopes the acknowledgement "goes along with a family of policies that are related to American Indians in the University system" such as the "establishment of a Native nations advisory board" whose members would "talk with people in the University community on a regular basis" (Huber, 2020). It is unclear when an official statement can be expected. One interviewee noted the University of Minnesota Board of Regents plays a large role in the lack of momentum behind any formal land acknowledgement. Positioned to define the University's vision, the Board of Regents is protective of the University's reputation, and wary of exposing the institution to financial or legal threats. A land acknowledgment could be seen by some as an admission of guilt or an acknowledgment of American Indian ownership of the land. Likewise, as a function of the University's bureaucracy, the Board is often slow moving, and less concerned with issues of the past than current problems that could threaten the financial security of the University system.

CHR Audit: Land Acknowledgments

Land Acknowledgements			
Respect for victims and their descendants	**An attitude of remorse**	**Accountability for corporate history**	**Commitments to justice in the present and future**
University of Minnesota-Duluth's land acknowledgement explicitly mentions the Ojibwe, Dakota, and Northern Cheyenne people who were stewards of the land long before the U of MN campus was established. It was also crafted in consultation with the tribes. However, this is just one land acknowledgement. No other campus has an official land acknowledgement.	No formal apology issued within the land acknowledgement.	University of Minnesota-Duluth's acknowledgement provides an overview of the treaties but does not directly tie the Treaties to the U's establishment. The acknowledgement also reads "Land acknowledgments do not exist in a past tense or historical context: colonialism is a current ongoing process, and we need to build the mindfulness of our present participation", which doesn't really account for the legacy issue.	The historical overview provided in the acknowledgement is helpful and provides an "opportunity for the entire University community to increase their awareness of the history of the land on which UMD resides" (UMD, 2020), but does not define any present or future commitments to justice.
✓	X	X	X

Tuition Waivers

Since its founding in the 1960's, the University of Minnesota-Morris has maintained the tuition waiver policy for Native Americans that was written into the original treaty that transferred the land from the federal government to the state of Minnesota. It is the only University of Minnesota school that has a tuition waiver of this kind for Native American students. One University of Minnesota-Morris History Professor with a background in American Indian treaties says that the tuition waiver policy is wildly misconstrued. First, it is a popular misconception that the University of Minnesota- Morris allows

any Native American student to attend for free. This isn't true. Native American students must apply and meet the admissions requirements of the school before applying for the waiver, which is awarded to students who can "demonstrate a connection to a federally recognized Native American tribe in the continental United States, Alaska, or Canada" (Minnesota Daily, 2018). There has been tension on campus between Native and non-Native students caused by a lack of understanding about the school's Native origins. This leads to non-Native students assuming any Native students attends school at Morris "for free" (Minnesota Daily, 2018). One American student board member of the U's American Indian Student Cultural Center said, "I think it's not only the University's job to have that information [on the Naive origins of the University] out there, but also partly part of the student population's job to be receptive to that history" (Minnesota Daily, 2018).

As an aside, it is important to note that the University of Minnesota-Morris isn't the only campus that struggles with a lack of awareness and education about the school's origins and Native history--it is a system-wide problem. Of the interviewees for this project, 100 percent pointed to ignorance (personal communication, April 1, 2021), lack of awareness (personal communication, April 8, 2021), and "lack of exposure to Native American history and culture" (personal communication, March 24, 2021) as a key barrier to Native recognition on all University of Minnesota campuses.

Secondly, the waiver was not created as a form of reconciliation. Rather, it was formed through a legally binding contract between two sovereign nations: the United States government and the Native American tribes at the time the land was sold. It was assumed by the original signers of the treaty that the waiver would not matter in the long run because it was expected that the Native population would die out over the years (Gregory, 2020).

Even though the waiver wasn't born out of reconciliation practices, it still has had a positive effect on Native American participation in higher education. The University of Minnesota-Morris is now considered a Native American-serving Non-Tribal Institution, "a designation given to colleges that have

more than 10% Native Students" (Gregory, 2020). Thanks to the tuition waiver, Native American enrollment at Morris has grown from 5% in 2000 to nearly 25% in 2020--far above the national average of 1-2% (Gregory, 2020). The Native American student body at Morris represents 50 Native nations, with the majority coming from the Upper Midwest's Anishinaabe (Ojibwe, Chippewa) and Dakota/Lakota/Nakota (Sioux) Nations (Gregory, 2020).

CHR Audit: Tuition Waivers

Tuition Waivers			
Respect for victims and their descendants	**An attitude of remorse**	**Accountability for corporate history**	**Commitments to justice in the present and future**
It is a popular misconception that the tuition waiver was born as a means of reparations. Rather, the tuition was a political transaction. Likewise, no other campus has a tuition waiver program for American Indian students.	None. The policy is not designed to be a form of reparations.	The policy page on University of Minnesota - Morris' web page does include a brief historic overview, which helps to explain why the policy exists to those who may not be aware.	The waiver continues to be honored and the impact of the waiver is proven by American Indian academic outcomes. However, given the U's legacy issues across all 5 campuses, a tuition waiver should be considered system wide.
X	X	✓	X

Advisory Councils

In 1994, superseding an older (1981) American Indian Advisory Board Policy, the Board of Regents directed each University of Minnesota campus enrolling American Indian students to establish an American Indian Advisory Board: "The boards are to be advisory to the chief executive officer of each campus and are to be constituted to broadly reflect the relevant American Indian communities" (Board of Regent Policy: American Indian Advisory Boards, 1994). The advisory board responsibilities include:

- “Serve as liaisons between the American Indian communities and the University” (Board of Regent Policy: American Indian Advisory Boards, 1994)
- “Consult with the CEO of each campus on matters related to campus programs and services on behalf of American Indian students and community to encourage and foster the educational advancement of American Indian students” (Board of Regent Policy: American Indian Advisory Boards, 1994)
- “Develop and increase support for American Indian educational advancement through public relations efforts at the community, state, and federal levels” (Board of Regent Policy: American Indian Advisory Boards, 1994)

The University of Minnesota-Morris’ American Indian Advisory Committee (AIAC) was established in 1988 to advise the Chancellor and is made to reflect the region’s American Indian communities (American Indian Advisory Committee, 2019). The AIAC follows the Board of Regents policy in roles and responsibilities and is currently the only active advisory committee in the University of Minnesota system. The Twin Cities campus’ advisory board has not been active for a number of years. According to a March 2021 *Minnesota Daily* article, student advocates “have requested that each campus at the University operate an American Indian advisory board, as dictated within board policy.” Dr. Kat Hayes, a University of Minnesota professor in the Anthropology and American Indian Studies departments, is quoted saying the Twin Cities campus advisory board “is supposed to be something that the campus does at the request of students, and students have been requesting it. And so far, it has not happened.” This means that Native students across the four remaining campuses lack an institutional body designed to advocate on their behalf and to foster relationships with the tribal nations.

CHR Audit: Advisory Councils

Advisory Councils			
Respect for victims and their descendants	**An attitude of remorse**	**Accountability for corporate history**	**Commitments to justice in the present and future**
Given the fact that there is a policy stipulating the implementation of an advisory school on each campus, paired with the fact that only one campus currently has an active advisory board suggests a general lack of respect for Native students' academic and long-term success.	None. This policy was designed to support students, not to recognize American Indian tribes as a partner.	None. The policy, which is over twenty years old at this point, does not reference the U's lack of interaction with the Tribes as a reason for this policy.	There is potential for justice in the future if the U reactivates its advisory boards across all five campuses. As of now, without advisory boards in place, there is no opportunity for future commitments to justice except on the Morris campus.
X	X	X	X

Staff Positions

During interviews for this project, nearly all interviewees mentioned leadership as a primary barrier to successful recognition work with/for American Indians. American Indian recognition gains or loses momentum with every new University administration. For American Indian relationship building to be on the agenda, it must be a priority of the sitting president. Over the last two years, the University of Minnesota has created two positions to help maintain American Indian relations as a priority, regardless of leadership, and to help steward relationships with the Tribes.

In November 2019, Professor Tadd Johnson was named the University of Minnesota's first Senior Director of American Indian Tribal Nations Relations (University Relations News Service, 2019). Since his appointment, Johnson and a small team of graduate students have been working on American Indian

initiatives for the University. As Senior Director of American Indian Tribal Nations Relations, he serves as a resource to tribal governments and Native American people, while also continuing his work as the director of the Tribal Sovereignty Institute and Graduate Studies in the American Indian Studies Department at the University of Minnesota-Duluth (University Relations News Service, 2019). In his day-to-day work with the tribes, his job is mainly to open the door for conversation and listening (personal communication, April 8, 2021).

On May 28, 2021, Karen Diver became the University of Minnesota's inaugural Senior Advisor to the President for Native American Affairs, a newly created position that is uncommon among higher education institutions (University Public Relations, 2021). Diver, the former Chairperson of the Fond Du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in Northern Minnesota, has extensive experience within higher educational settings, as well as within advising roles. Before joining the University of Minnesota, Diver served as the University of Arizona Native American Advancement Initiative's Business Development Director, the inaugural Faculty Fellow for Inclusive Excellence for Native American Affairs at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, as well as faculty at both St. Scholastica and the University of Minnesota Duluth (University Public Relations, 2021). From 2015-2017, Diver served as President Obama's Special Assistant to the President on Native American Affairs (University Public Relations, 2021).

In her newly crafted advising role at the University of Minnesota, Diver will be responsible for "developing strategies for increasing retention rates for American Indian students, faculty and staff and strengthening the University's commitment to the tribal nations in their role as a land-grant institution" (Machtig, 2021). Unlike Professor Johnson's position, which focuses mainly on facilitating communication between the tribes and the U, the Senior Advisor for Indian Affairs will advise the president on university policy regarding American Indian affairs (Machtig, 2021). Part of the Senior Advisor's responsibilities will be coordinating with Minnesota's tribal nations to ensure policy decisions "acknowledge the University's status and history as a land-grant institution" (Machtig, 2021).

CHR Audit: Staff Positions

Staff Positions			
Respect for victims and their descendants	**An attitude of remorse**	**Accountability for corporate history**	**Commitments to justice in the present and future**
These positions are designed to foster dialogue with Minnesota's native tribes. They are held by American Indian individuals who have experience and knowledge of the politics and culture of American Indian tribes.	These positions were not necessarily created as an apology or expression of remorse.	If done correctly, these two positions will help the U become accountable to its history as a land-grant university.	Staff positions ensure that American Indian relations are prioritized in the future regardless of presidential administration.
✓	X	✓	✓

TRUTH: Towards Respect and University-Tribal Healing

Since January 2021, Professor Johnson, and some University of Minnesota graduate students, in close partnership with MIAC, have been stewarding the compilation of each tribe's history with the University of Minnesota (personal communication, 2021). The histories collected during this process, using a third-party historian, will be used to create a historical report that analyzes the University's relationship with the tribal nations and to identify areas for "first steps" that the new Senior Adviser will spearhead (Machtig, 2021). The TRUTH task force "composed of representatives of each of the Tribal Nations, representatives from the American Indian Studies faculty and other experts" is in the process of being formed (personal communication, 2021). Lisa Marshall, Director of Communications for Office for Equity and Diversity, shared in an email to University of Minnesota staff, "it is time for the University of Minnesota to honestly examine its past and I am committed to openly receiving an honest and frank

assessment of the University's history. I look forward to many conversations to come as this work progresses."

The honest and frank assessment cannot be understated--the information that will be revealed in this commissioned report will be hard for the University to swallow and shouldn't be ignored or silenced. This commissioned report is a significant first step regarding a corporate historical responsibility framework--it forces remembrance and acknowledgement, gives the University a baseline to grow and learn from, a springboard for dialogue, and closely involves the tribal nations.

TRUTH Commission			
Respect for victims and their descendants	**An attitude of remorse**	**Accountability for corporate history**	**Commitments to justice in the present and future**
This report gives American Indians an opportunity to share how they have been harmed by the University of Minnesota's actions. The report demands dialogue and listening. Through this process, the American Indian tribes have an opportunity to distinguish themselves from the other tribes and define their relationship (or lack thereof) with the University.	The TRUTH Commission is rooted in an understanding that the University didn't do enough for too long, and because of this they don't even have a grasp on the scope or scale of past wrongdoing. Hopefully, upon completion of the report, a formal apology from the University will be issued to the American Indian tribes.	It is too soon to say what will come from this commission--the board of regents might decide not to publish the report if the findings are deemed too threatening to the reputation of the University. It is also important to consider what the tribes want the U to do with the report. These histories contain trauma, and the tribe may not want to publish these experiences for the public to read.	The Senior Advisor will use this report as a starting point for building relationships with American Indian communities, and crafting policies that are committed to justice and equity for current and future students, but again, it is too soon to evaluate this component of the project.
✓	✓/X	X	X

Key Findings and Insights

While the TRUTH Commission may offer a glimmer of hope for the U, overall, the University of Minnesota as a system is failing to recognize its harmful legacy as a land-grant university. In particular, the CHR audit reveals the U has not done a good job expressing remorse or accountability in its public facing communications, and internally, towards their students, staff, faculty, and leadership. Only occasionally does the U demonstrate respect for the American Indian descendants and commitments to current, and future justice. Upon analyzing and reviewing the primary and secondary research conducted for this project, five key findings are revealed:

Finding One	Finding Two
Until President Gabel, the University has never meaningfully engaged with the American Indian tribal communities, let alone acknowledged past harm.	Ignorance among students, staff, and leadership perpetuates cultural and historical misconceptions that contribute to the continued harm to the American Indian community.
Finding Three	**Finding Four**
This issue is not unique to the U, and not a single public land-grant university has successfully acknowledged their legacy issues. The University of Minnesota can be a leader in this work.	For American Indian recognition to happen, the issue cannot rest solely on the shoulders of the University president.
Finding Five	**Finding Six**
Following the death of George Floyd, Minnesota is in the midst of a culturally significant moment, and much of the public is receptive to learning more about their neighbors' cultures and histories.	For American Indians, dispossession is a deeply personal issue, fraught with emotion and mistrust.

Recommendations

If the University of Minnesota chooses to embark on the journey to recognize its problematic legacy (and it should), it has a complicated path ahead. Not only does the institution have to consider components of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, it also must understand the inner workings of tribal

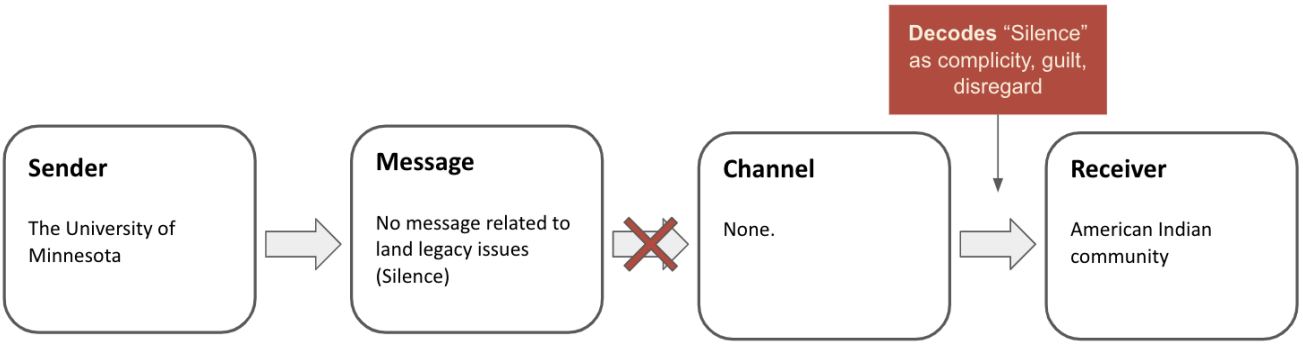
sovereignty and assess its unique relationship with each of the 11 tribes. For change to happen, University policy will have to be designed (in consultation with the tribes), approved (by the board of regents), and implemented, and the University will have to know how to communicate this work to the campus and, eventually, the larger Minnesota communities. The role of communications will be crucial in solving the University's legacy issue, helping to overcome the barriers to meaningful recognition by informing the campus community about American Indians and the legacy of the Land-grant Act, fostering respect for and recognition of American Indians, and laying the foundation for relationship building between two very fractured communities.

Communications Goal	
In consultation with the American Indian tribes, develop an updated, historically accurate narrative about the University of Minnesota's founding to be shared and discussed with the campus community.	
Communications Objectives	
Awareness	Inform the on-campus community about the University's legacy of dispossession, as well as the history of land-grant universities, and American Indian history, governance, and culture.
Collaboration	Consult with tribal leadership to ensure the University of Minnesota is equipped with accurate information needed to portray the history of its founding and to maintain American Indian recognition as an ongoing process on campus.
Disruption	Disrupt the dominant narratives upheld in University of Minnesota informational communications about its history as a land-grant university.

Planning

Up until recently, the University of Minnesota has not offered any formal channel of communication with the American Indian tribes. When considering the Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver Model, it would appear that because the University wasn't communicating with the tribes, there wouldn't be anything for the tribes to decode or interpret.

However, what the University overlooked was the fact that “no message” *is* a message, and one that lends itself to be interpreted as complicity, disregard for American Indian well-being, and even guilt.



Because there haven’t been any internal or formal lines of communication established between the University and the American Indian communities, American Indian tribes and organizations have responded to the U’s silence through more public channels. For example, the recent MIAC resolutions and complementary press release are an example of how the American Indian community is communicating with the University. The American Indian community’s decision to use earned, owned, and shared media using public facing channels is a deliberate choice that forces the “University issue” into the public eye, making the land legacy issue a concern among the community at-large.

The University of Minnesota would benefit from opening formal lines of communication with the American Indian community to discuss its problematic history as a land-grant university. The University increases the likelihood of crafting an informed, strategic communications strategy that responds to its problematic past with input from the Native community. Internal communications channels would foster a feedback loop that is more direct than relying on press releases and interviews to catch the University’s attention and is more likely to cultivate trust and accountability (Richardson & Hinton, 2015). The

feedback loop not only requires communication, but it also demands dialogue, giving the American Indian community a seat at the decision-making table.

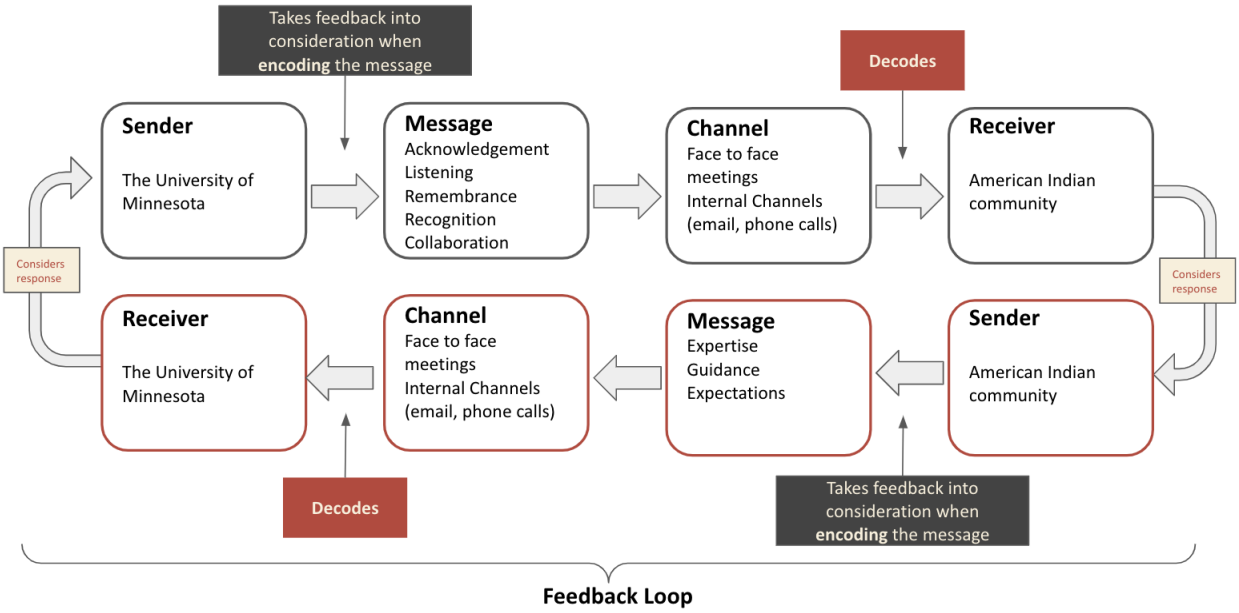


Figure 2. Proposed model of communications for American Indian and legacy recognition

Key Stakeholders

As the leading educational institution of the state, the University of Minnesota has to manage a the competing expectations of a large pool of stakeholders, including internal stakeholders: students, U of MN leadership (president, chancellors, deans, board of regents, etc.), and faculty and staff, as well as external stakeholders: prospective students and their parents/guardians, tribal communities, alumni, donors, other educational institutions such as the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the state legislature, historical societies and archivists, and the general public. Eventually, virtually all these stakeholder groups should be engaged in and/or informed of the University of Minnesota's legacy recognition work. In the early stages of the recognition process, however, the U should hone its focus on

those stakeholder groups who have the most influence on the direction of this process: American Indian Tribal Leadership, the University of Minnesota Board of Regents, and students, faculty, and staff.

American Indian Tribal Leadership	
Stakeholder Overview	There are 11 tribal nations that share geography with Minnesota, each with its own laws and government (some have branches of government, for example, while others are led by a Tribal Council headed by a Tribal Chair). As federally recognized sovereign nations, tribal governments maintain authority over the membership, lands, and government affairs of their tribe. Unlike U.S. leadership which is rooted in individualism and the protection of personal freedoms, tribal leadership is highly collaborative, often requiring consent from the entire tribe, and focused on protecting the welfare of the tribe by maintaining culture and traditions (First Nations Development Institute, 2013). The 11 tribes of Minnesota include: Bois Forte Band of Chippewa—Anishinaabe Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa—Anishinaabe Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa —Anishinaabe Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe —Anishinaabe Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe—Anishinaabe Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians—Anishinaabe White Earth Nation—Anishinaabe Lower Sioux Community—Dakota Prairie Island Indian Community—Dakota Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community—Dakota Upper Sioux Community—Dakota
Stakeholder Mindset	American Indians are emotionally and spiritually connected to the land and are angry that the University continues to be silent about its ties to the dispossession of American Indians.
Barriers	Mistrust/lack of confidence in the U to do the right thing; feel angry, frustrated, and unheard
Receptivity	Strongly believe the tribes should be consulted with; willing to offer guidance and feedback; lived experience offers untapped expertise
Communications Objective	Collaboration
Key Driver	Emotional Bond - Fostering trust between American Indian leadership and the University

University of Minnesota Board of Regents	
Stakeholder Overview	The Board of Regents is the University's governing board made up of 12 volunteer members, one from each of Minnesota's eight congressional districts, and four from the state at large (University of Minnesota, 2021).The Board is charged with "articulating a vision for the University and working to ensure the University of Minnesota fulfills its mission of education, research, and outreach for the benefit of the people of Minnesota, the nation, and the world" (University of Minnesota, 2021). Each member is elected by the joint convention of the Minnesota senate and house of representatives and serves staggered six-year terms (University of Minnesota, 2021). Tasked with approving major policies such as tuition increases and an annual budget, the Regents play a significant role in deciding whether American Indian recognition and legacy acknowledgment should be a priority of the University. In one interview (March 24, 2021), the board of regents was criticized for caring more about the University of Minnesota Football program than American Indian recognition because it is a key revenue driver, while working with the tribes to build a relationship isn't lucrative. While the Regents are meant to be apolitical, they are viewed by many as representatives of the state, pushing for an agenda that aligns with House and Senate measures, rather than University priorities. The Regents have also faced increasing criticism for the lack of representation on their board, favoring the politically connected over the most qualified, leading to a largely white, male, and affluent board.
Stakeholder Mindset	Protective of the U's reputation; some see tribal governments as separate from the state, and therefore unconcerned with University decision making; do not necessarily feel accountable for issues that occurred more than 170 years ago
Barriers	Bureaucratic and slow moving; ignorance and misconceptions; unversed in Tribal governance and politics; competing priorities and budget constraints; wary of exposing the U to criticism or revealing past harm because it might have financial repercussions (such as reparations or pressure to return land)
Receptivity	Opportunity to distinguish the U as a leader amongst the U.S.' Land-grant Universities; culturally specific moment where the public is looking for institutions to tell the truth, and to be accountable.
Communications Objective	Awareness, Collaboration
Key Driver	Activation - American Indian recognition, legacy acknowledgement are top priorities

University of Minnesota Students, Faculty, and Staff	
Stakeholder Overview	This broad stakeholder group is made up of the 75,000+ students, faculty, and staff that make up the majority of the University of Minnesota's on-campus learning community. While each campus has varying demographics across race/ethnicity, gender, age, and socio-economic status, many students (University of Minnesota: Official Enrollment Statistics, 2020), as well as faculty and staff are white (University of Minnesota: Employee Headcount Data, 2020).
Stakeholder Mindset	Largely unaware of Minnesota's American Indian community, U's relationship with American Indian community; believes in the U's mission and sees the U campuses as a good environment for learning and critical discourse
Barriers	Largely ignorant of University's history, what a land-grant university is, or the U's relationship with American Indians; largely ignorant of American Indian history, politics, and culture; competing priorities, lots of issues being raised by campus groups (divestment, UMPD and BLM) difficult to focus on all of them
Receptivity	Many students, faculty, and staff are aware that they are unaware, want to learn, and be a better ally and advocate
Communications Objective	Awareness
Key Driver	Issue Awareness - Ensure the campus community is informed about and has access to information about the University's founding

As the University slowly progresses towards a tribe vetted and informed historical narrative, it has the responsibility as the top educational institution in the state to make this information available to the public. A separate, but important stakeholder group are those who engage with the University of Minnesota from the community at large--individuals coined by the University as "Opinion Leaders", which are discussed below. Engaging the larger community in the University of Minnesota's land-grant legacy recognition work increases the likelihood that the current socially dominant narrative that foregoes the University's dark founding will become a narrative of the past.

The U of MN's "Opinion Leaders" from the General Public	
Stakeholder Overview	Part of the University of Minnesota's mission is to exchange knowledge between the University and society "by making the knowledge and resources created and preserved at the University accessible to the citizens of the state" (Board of Regents, 2008). Those from the public who typically engage with the University of Minnesota, whether through lectures, continuing education classes, or performances (among others), are considered "Opinion Leaders" by the University (Kanihan, personal communication, May 14, 2021). Opinion Leaders are typically college educated, middle- to upper-middle class individuals predominantly from the 7-county metro. While they might not have received their college degree(s) from the University of Minnesota, they value learning and continued education and see the University as a premiere resource for interesting, topical learning opportunities.
Stakeholder Mindset	Generally aware of DEI issues within the Twin Cities community, especially following the death of George Floyd; want to become more educated about equity issues and crave opportunities to critically engage in conversation around these issues; put a lot of trust in the U's programming, see the U as an authority on such topics and the best vehicle for these conversations.
Barriers	Geographic location - statewide; might be more focused on or informed about other DEI issues affecting Minnesota communities such as police brutality or gun violence.
Receptivity	Opinion Leaders are aware they are unaware and want to learn more
Communications Objective	Awareness
Key Driver	Buzz

Strategy

When deliberating on how best to communicate the University of Minnesota's efforts to recognize the harm perpetrated against American Indians at its founding, it is important to understand the unique circumstances of those who have been harmed. Working with American Indian tribes requires sensitivity to the past *and* present, respect for American Indians and tribal sovereignty and the ability to listen and be vulnerable and accepting. Special "up front" strategy considerations include:

- **Tribal consultation:** It is important that the University of Minnesota understands tribal sovereignty when considering relationship building, policy and decision making, and

communications. For the University of Minnesota's legacy acknowledgment process to accurately communicate the story of its founding and inspire meaningful and impactful action, the U needs to be committed to consulting with tribal leaders. Input and guidance are imperative from a truth-telling perspective. Without it, the U will continue to tell a one-sided story that leaves out the perspective of the American Indian community.

- **Tribal consent:** Likewise, the conversations the University has with and the stories it collects from American Indians (particularly through the TRUTH commission) are not the University's to tell without tribal consent. Tribal consent should always be obtained before communicating with other, non-Native University of Minnesota stakeholders about the University of Minnesota's founding.
- **Word-choice:** While potentially clumsy to initiate, the University of Minnesota must work with each tribe to understand how to *talk* about this work. For too long, the University has failed to deliberate on the words it uses to describe its interactions with American Indians. This has detrimental effects that can be long-lasting and difficult to reverse, especially coming from the premiere educator of the state.
- **Ethical storytelling practices:** Storytelling can be a powerful strategic communication tool used to create connections with the target audiences. When stories are based upon real-life instances that include trauma, violence, or exploitation, the University of Minnesota needs to consider not just the institution's goals when using these narratives, but the impact they will have on the American Indian communities, as well. This will be a challenge for University of Minnesota communicators who will have to balance telling the story of land-grant universities while mitigating the psychological harm this story may cause.
- **Distinct and unique experiences:** There are 11 American Indian tribes sharing boundaries with Minnesota. Some of the tribes are Ojibwe and others are Dakota, and each has a unique

governing body with distinct characteristics. The University will need to cultivate relationships with all 11 tribes to learn about these distinctions and to avoid over-generalizations.

- **Motivations and expectations:** Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are a primary focus of the University of Minnesota's strategic plan. With increased scrutiny on the University's DEI policies and practices, the University may see this work as an opportunity to showcase institutional change and progress towards a more equitable campus community. While the University should be communicating this work to key stakeholders, the process should be tiered, starting with internal stakeholders, and slowly working towards external groups. Likewise, this process is long overdue, and part of the University's messaging should communicate this. Rather than using this project as a celebration or a shining example of DEI, the University should be using this process as an opportunity to disrupt dominant narratives that it is responsible for perpetuating and should do so humbly and without fanfare.

Because the University of Minnesota needs to be sensitive to the wishes of the American Indian tribes, and because communicating about the violent and traumatic founding of the University requires tact and thoughtfulness, the University of Minnesota should first implement an internal communications strategy. An internal communications strategy will allow trust to be cultivated between the University and Tribal Leadership, and it will create opportunities to consult with the tribes to craft a historical narrative that is representative of both parties' experiences. An internal communications strategy will also allow the University to educate students, faculty, and staff while also having conversations that are critical and action orientated. Once the relationship between the University and the American Indian tribal leaders has been established, more external stakeholders can slowly be layered into the strategy.

Communications Strategy
Equip University of Minnesota communications professionals with the knowledge to share the facts accurately and thoughtfully about the University's founding as a land-grant university using internal communications channels and best practices.
Issue Narrative
For nearly 170 years, the University of Minnesota has overlooked and underplayed the violent dispossession of American Indians that underpins our founding. Long overdue, the University of Minnesota is beginning to rewrite the harmful narrative about our founding - in consultation with and in recognition of - the American Indians who have been wronged for generations. Working together, we aim to create a community of learning that is rooted in truth about our past and that supports the future wellbeing of Native students, their families and communities, and their land.
Rationale
This communications plan solves the problem of the University of Minnesota's land-grant university legacy issue because it centers American Indian voices, emphasizes American Indian experience, and includes education and awareness building measures to inform the non-Native campus community.

Key Messages by Segment

Message	Tribal Leadership	Board of Regents	Students, Staff, Faculty
Acknowledgement The University of Minnesota acknowledges that it benefited from the dispossession of American Indians and recognizes the importance of remembering the violence that underpins the founding of our institution.	**X**		**X**
Consultation and Guidance Long overdue, the U seeks to listen and learn about each tribe's experiences, so we can tell our shared history in partnership.	**X**	**X**	
Learning from the Past for the Future To reach our DEI goals and to better meet the needs of our students in the future, we must learn more about our American Indian neighbors and how the University's past actions have impacted them, to avoid them in the future.		**X**	
The History of Our History Inform about the work being done in consultation with the tribes to "rewrite" the narrative of the U as a public land-grant university to better reflect the perspective of the American Indians that were impacted and invite feedback from the on-campus community.			**X**

Distinction in Truth As one of 52 land-grant universities, the University of Minnesota can be at the forefront of Native American recognition over the long term, leading the way for other universities		**X**	

Media		
Tribal Leadership	**Board of Regents**	**Students, Staff, and Faculty**
Internal Channels (in-person meetings, conferences, joint newsletter)	Internal Channels (in-person education/training events, on-boarding, in-person meetings, conferences)	Internal Channels (1x/semester open forums, community conversations, incoming student collateral and orientation material, intranet, newsletters, and e-updates from the office of the Senior Advisor for Indian Affairs (could include pre-recorded videos)

Implementation

There are an overwhelming number of reasons why the University of Minnesota should pursue relationship building and recognition efforts with the American Indian tribes. However, the ultimate reason why the University of Minnesota should pursue this work can be distilled using the first and cardinal Page Principal, “tell the truth”. For the University of Minnesota’s DEI initiatives and five-year strategy to work, and--more specifically--for the University campuses to be safe, supportive communities for Native students, the University of Minnesota needs to tell the truth. Moving forward with DEI initiatives without acknowledging the past could threaten the University of Minnesota’s credibility as the top educational institution in the state and makes the school appear dysfunctional, and ill-prepared to be a steward of inclusion and belonging.

Telling the truth in a historical context, however, can be difficult especially when the issue occurred generations ago and involves more than one party. The Four Principles of Corporate Historical Responsibility help guide historical truth telling. In the case of public-land-grant universities like the

University of Minnesota, the initial dispossession and violence against American Indians occurred nearly 200 years ago. As a result, the University cannot simply rewrite its history on its own. To genuinely tell the truth in the present day requires dialogue with American Indians, listening, remembrance, and acceptance. The success of this project is predicated on slow, intentional relationship building that incorporates these CHR principals, which is represented in the following tiered implementation plan:

Phase One: Collaboration (September 2021-March 2022) Overview

As one of the largest educational institutions in the state, the University of Minnesota holds significant power in defining its own historical narrative without having to consider other stakeholders. UMN communicators need to recognize the unequal power relations that exist between the U and the American Indian tribes and build in opportunities for all parties to have an equal voice in the development and refining of the University's historical narrative. One communications planning scholar, John Forester, emphasizes that participants who've been victims of historical trauma "should have the time and space to talk about and express the pain they have experienced from exclusion and exploitation" (Forester, 1999 as cited in LaFever, 2011). In alignment with Forster's suggestion, Phase One considers the importance of consultation and collaboration between the University of Minnesota and American Indian tribal leaders. Before the University of Minnesota shares its revised historical narrative with the board of regents or on-campus community, it must first *re-remember* its history in a way that accounts for the historical memory of the tribe. Phase One builds in opportunities for American Indian tribes to share their experiences, and ensures the University considers these experiences when redefining their historical narrative.

Phase One also takes into consideration the communications preferences of American Indian tribes. Culturally, while most American Indians prefer in-person meetings to build relationships and

foster trust, there is also a growing preference to receive communications via email and social media (Veith, 2014). This implementation plan intentionally aligns with these evolving preferences.

Because of the dialogical set-up between the U and tribal leadership and the alignment with communications preferences, Phase One most closely aligns with the first principle of CHR--respecting victims and their descendants.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">Phase One: Collaboration (September 2021-March 2022)</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Tactic 1.1: Bi-monthly 1:1 meetings (5-6 tribes/month)
The Senior Advisor and Tribal Relations Advisor will conduct meetings with five to six tribal leaders each month to discuss the development of and contribute to the University's rewritten historical narrative.</td></tr>
<tr><th>1.1 Target Audience</th><th>1.1 Budget</th><th>1.1 Staffing</th><th>1.1 Frequency</th></tr>
<tr><td>Tribal leadership</td><td>$7,800 (Meeting technology and supplies)</td><td>Senior Advisor, Tribal Relations Advisor</td><td>Ongoing (bi-monthly)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Tactic 1.2: In-person Conferences
The University will host two in-person conferences convening all 11 tribes and key U of MN stakeholders, with the purpose of fostering dialogue and understanding. The first conference, taking place in September 2021, will be an opportunity for the University of Minnesota stakeholders to understand the tribes' expectations for this work. The second conference, taking place in March 2022, will pose an opportunity for the University to present its rewritten historical narrative based on what was learned through ongoing conversations and the first conference with the tribes, as well as action plans for future U of MN/American Indian tribal relationship building.</td></tr>
<tr><th>1.2 Target Audience</th><th>1.2 Budget</th><th>1.2 Staffing</th><th>1.2 Frequency</th></tr>
<tr><td>Tribal leadership, Board of Regents</td><td>$30,000 ($15,000/conference)</td><td>Event staff, catering, Senior Advisor, Tribal Relations Advisor, Communications Associate</td><td>1x September 2021
1x March 2022</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Tactic 1.3: Joint eNewsletter from UMN President and Senior Advisor
To keep tribal leadership abreast of developments, a joint newsletter from the U of MN President and the Senior Advisor to the President for Native American Affairs will be sent monthly to tribal leaders. The eNewsletter will be easily shareable, so the tribal leadership can forward the updates to their tribal communities. As the relationship progresses, and if the tribal leadership approves, a listserv could be created to provide direct updates to the tribal communities. The newsletter will also feature a link to a feedback form where community members can offer feedback and suggestions for future work.</td></tr>
</table>

1.3 Target Audience	1.3 Budget	1.3 Staffing	1.3 Frequency
Tribal leadership (and by extension, tribal communities), Board of Regents	$2,400 (1 newsletter/month)	Office of the Advisor on American Indian Affairs Communications Associate	1x/month

It is important to note that while consultation with the tribes must be an ongoing commitment, for the purposes of this project the collaboration phase captures only the time it might take to craft a historically accurate, factual narrative. By purposefully working to address the "original sin" of the University of Minnesota, the U will then have a foundation to jump off of as it continues to address other legacies of past harm in consultation with American Indian leadership.

Phase 2: Awareness (April 2022-ongoing) Overview

Phase Two of implementation can begin once the rewritten historical narrative has been developed and approved by the American Indian tribes and University of Minnesota leadership. American Indian approval of the University of Minnesota's historical narrative is a crucial element to the success of this work. Without it, the University would only continue to perpetuate white-washed, socially dominant narratives that have been upheld for too long. The next step in the process is for the newly approved narrative to be introduced to the on-campus community and board of regents.

Phase Two does not just introduce the board of regents and on-campus community to a newly rewritten statement. Phase Two educates students, faculty, and staff about American Indian culture, politics, and history; it raises awareness about the University of Minnesota's legacy issues and what it is doing to recognize past wrongdoing; and it actively engages the campus community in conversations about the University of Minnesota's history with American Indians. Transparency and dialogue in Phase Two will be essential to earn the trust of the target audiences. From a CHR perspective, by publicly

recognizing historical wrongdoing to the on-campus community, the University of Minnesota is demonstrating an attitude of remorse and accountability for corporate history.

Phase Two poses an opportunity to hire a Communications Associate, preferably an American Indian graduate with a background in communications or something similar, who would work in the office of the Senior Advisor to the President on Native American Affairs as the primary planner and writer for Phase Two (and Three) tactics.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">Phase Two: Awareness (April 2022-ongoing)</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Tactic 2.1: Internal Newsletter from Office of President and/or Senior Advisor
Similar to the newsletter shared with American Indian tribal leaders, a newsletter from the Office of the President or Senior Advisor will be sent to current students, faculty, and staff to acknowledge past wrongdoing, inform ongoing legacy recognition work, and invite participation in campus events and trainings.</td></tr>
<tr><th>2.1 Target Audience</th><th>2.1 Budget</th><th>2.1 Staffing</th><th>2.1 Frequency</th></tr>
<tr><td>On-campus community of students, faculty, and staff</td><td>$2,400
(1 newsletter/month x 12 months)</td><td>Office of the Advisor on American Indian Affairs Communications Associate</td><td>1x/month</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Tactic 2.2: Hybrid (in-person and online) education/training events
Through online, self-paced educational trainings, and in-person, instructor-led classes, students, faculty, staff, and the board will have opportunities to learn about the UMN’s history with the tribes, as well as American Indian culture, history, and politics. Training can be incorporated into the hiring and onboarding process for staff and faculty, as well as student orientation activities. The Board of Regents will also participate in training that feeds into other DEI and strategic planning initiatives. In-person training events for each segment will occur once per semester.</td></tr>
<tr><th>2.2 Target Audience</th><th>2.2 Budget</th><th>2.2 Staffing</th><th>2.2 Frequency</th></tr>
<tr><td>Board of Regents, Students, Faculty, and Staff</td><td>$5,000 (Video production x3)
$3,000 (Intranet Updates)
$20,000 (Training Events x6)</td><td>Senior Advisor, Communications Associate,
Training Liaison</td><td>Ongoing</td></tr>
</table>

Tactic 2.3: Senior Advisor and Tribal Relations Advisor Office Hours
Designed to answer questions and collect feedback, the Senior Advisor and Tribal Relations Advisor will both hold office hours once a week or month (depending on their availability). Office hours will be held over Zoom so students from all University of Minnesota campuses can attend. Office hours would also present an opportunity for graduate interns working with the Senior Advisor or Tribal Relations Advisor to host office hours, as well.

2.3 Target Audience	2.3 Budget	2.3 Staffing	2.3 Frequency
Students, Faculty, and Staff	N/A	Senior Advisor, Tribal Relations Advisor, Communications Associate, Interns	Ongoing

Phase 3: Disruption (September 2022-ongoing)

With a historical narrative approved by the American Indian tribes and discussed with the on-campus community, Phase Three will introduce "Opinion Leaders" from the broader community to the University of Minnesota's awareness building initiatives related to its legacy issues. Delivered through tactics that invite conversation and further dialogue, publicly demonstrate remorse, share resources and future plans for continued recognition work, and formally engage the media for the first time, Phase Three will embody the Corporate Historical Responsibility principles of demonstrating an attitude of remorse, accountability for corporate history, and commitment to justice in the present and future. Importantly, all Phase Three information should be reviewed and approved by the Tribes before being shared with the public, in keeping with the first CHR principle of paying respect for victims and their descendants.

Phase Three: Disruption (September 2022-ongoing)

Tactic 3.1: "Community Conversations"
Hybrid, in-person and live-streamed events, Community Conversations are meant to spark discussion and awareness about American Indian/University of Minnesota relations. Held once a semester, community conversations are open to the community at large. Beginning with a speaker or panel of speakers composed of a diverse array of American Indian, University of Minnesota, and other relevant representatives to discuss recognition work, DEI initiatives, and plans for the future, the events end with an opportunity for community members to pose questions to the speaker/panelists.

3.1 Target Audience	3.1 Budget	3.1 Staffing	3.1 Frequency
Faculty, Staff, and Students; Opinion Leaders; American Indian Tribal Leaders	$1,000 ($500 speaker fee x 2) $1,500 (Set-up/take-down, run of show labor) $1,000 (Printed informational materials) $5,000 (Marketing/paid advertising on MPR News, Star Tribune website/paper)	Office of the Advisor on American Indian Affairs Communications Associate	1x October 2022 1x March 2023

Tactic 3.2: Dedicated webpage/site
A dedicated space to retell the history of the U of MN that is open for the public to see and engage with, the website will be a central page/site for a public apology and updated historical narrative, updates on future American Indian recognition efforts, resource guides for other universities, and a place to house TRUTH commission report (if the U gets permission from the tribes to publish it).

3.2 Target Audience	3.2 Budget	3.2 Staffing	3.2 Frequency
Faculty, Staff, and Students; Opinion Leaders; American Indian Tribal Leaders	$500	Communications Associate	Ongoing

Tactic 3.3: News release
If the U gets permission from the tribes to publicize this work, it should consider using news releases to spread the word about its recognition efforts. Local news outlets include the Star Tribune, Kare11, MPR, and the Minnesota Historical Society Newsletter. But this work is also relevant on a national scale. With the right angle, the U's recognition work could be included in the New York Times, Native American Times, PBS NewsHour, Wall Street Journal, Chronicle of Higher Education, and more.

3.3 Target Audience	3.3 Budget	3.3 Staffing	3.3 Frequency
Opinion leaders/public	$750	Communications Associate	1x October 2022 1x March 2023

Evaluation

Up until recently, the University of Minnesota has made little effort to engage with the American Indian tribes that share boundaries with Minnesota. This overwhelming lack of engagement with American Indian tribes directly contradicts the University's strategic plan--which emphasizes community and belonging--and mission statement, which promises to "search for truth" and share this knowledge through "education for a diverse community" (University of Minnesota, 2008). The University's failure to confront and recognize its land-grant university legacy issues as it relates to the violent dispossession of American Indians is problematic because it perpetuates a narrative that denies abuse and erases the American Indian experience. In the present day, when many American Indian students at the University of Minnesota feel "othered" by the campus community, the U's decision to move forward with DEI initiatives without acknowledging past harm is degrading and psychologically harmful to these students and can negatively impact student outcomes.

The University of Minnesota will know it has implemented a successful Corporate Historical Responsibility communications strategy when a historical narrative that is informed by American Indian experience and memory is developed, approved, and shared with the campus community, and perceptions and attitudes about the University of Minnesota's founding are changed. With a historical narrative that is rooted in remembrance and recognition, the University of Minnesota can truly begin implementing authentic, genuine policies that protect American Indian students, their families, communities and their land.

Without communication, there has not been an opportunity for trust to grow between the University and the American Indian tribes, so, in a very literal sense, the University is starting from ground zero in terms of its legacy recognition and relationship building work. In these early stages of legacy recognition, evaluation and measurement will primarily be used to set a "baseline" in terms of satisfaction, awareness, engagement, and perceptions about the University, especially as it relates to DEI

initiatives. Fundamental to a Corporate Historical Responsibility strategy, however, is an ongoing commitment to justice in the present and the future. Evaluation and measurement will also help inform future legacy recognition work to address other, related historical wrongdoings. Before moving on to future recognition work, the University must measure the impact of Phase One, Two, and Three.

Evaluation	
Phase One Outcome: American Indians feel heard and included in the University of Minnesota's legacy recognition work.	
Measurement	**Description**
# of meetings/month	Considering the University has never consistently engaged the American Indian community before, the number of meetings per month between the Senior Advisor/Director of Tribal Relations and tribal leadership will be a simple indicator of success.
Follow-up surveys	Following each Leadership Conference, satisfaction surveys will be sent to conference attendees. Survey will include topics related to perceptions of, satisfaction with, and engagement with the University of Minnesota. University of Minnesota communicators should use the survey responses from the first conference to make improvements to the second conference. If perceptions, satisfaction, and engagement results are lower than expected, the University should consider following up during the 1:1 meetings to get more feedback.
# of feedback form submissions/feedback form content	While the University will primarily work directly with American Indian leadership, the feedback form is included in the Joint Newsletter with the intention of getting a sense of perceptions, attitudes, and opinions from the broader American Indian community. The responses could be used to decide how best to include more American Indian voices in this work.
Newsletter open rates	Likewise, open rates on the Joint Newsletter will indicate whether the broader American Indian community is receiving updates about the U's work.
Historical narrative approved by American Indian Tribal Leadership	The ultimate indicator of success, the American Indian tribal leaders will issue a stamp of "approval" for the University of Minnesota's updated historical narrative. Approval means that the University has listened to the tribes' experiences and expectations and was able to articulate a realistic, truthful history about the U's violent founding.

Phase Two Outcome: The on-campus community demonstrates a deeper understanding of the UMN's founding and its impact on American Indians.	
Measurement	**Description**
Number of in-person training attendees	To measure just how engaged the on-campus community is with the University's recognition work, trainers should be tracking how many people are attending each training session.
Pre and post training survey	For those who participate in either online or in-person training, they should be asked to complete a pre- and post-training survey. Participants should be asked to rate how much they know about American Indians and the University's founding before and after the training. Additional metrics could include whether the attendee was a student, faculty, or staff member; motivation for attending or completing the training; and if they'd recommend the training to a friend or colleague.
Number of office hour attendees	To measure just how engaged the on-campus community is with the University's recognition work, the Senior Advisor and the Director of Tribal relations (or their admin staff) should track the number of people who attend office hours.
Share this capstone project with Senior Advisor	In an effort to provide university-specific context to the newly hired Senior Advisor to the President on Native American Affairs, this project will be submitted to her for her review, with the goal of informing her understanding of the University's legacy issues.
Phase Three Outcome: The public is aware and approving of the UMN's updated historical narrative and ongoing recognition work	
Measurement	**Description**
# of Community Conversation attendees	To measure just how engaged the Opinion Leaders from the general public are with the University's recognition work, the number of attendees should be tracked.
Post Community Conversation survey	Following the Community Conversations, attendees will be emailed a survey that covers topics related to perceptions of and satisfaction with the University of Minnesota's legacy recognition work. The survey will also ask participants to self-rate how much they learned during the event.
# of website visitors	To measure whether or not the University's updated narrative is reaching the general public, website metrics including number of website visitors, as well as where they are coming from and how long they spend on the site should be collected and analyzed on a regular basis.

Media coverage and click throughs	Keeping track of which news organizations published an article about the U's legacy recognition work is an important component to track in terms of reach. The more news organizations that pick up the story, the more people will learn about the University's efforts. Likewise, the media releases should include a call-to-action to visit the website to learn more. To see whether the story is sparking people's curiosity to learn more, the University can track click-throughs to the new website.

Conclusion

Before the Morrill Act of 1862, higher education was available only to those from the upper echelons of society. The Morrill Act, commonly referred to as the Land-Grant Act, opened learning opportunities to thousands of working people across the American West previously excluded from higher education. The intentions of the Land-Grant Act were no doubt noble, but they came at quite the cost to American Indians' own prosperity and achievement. Today, public land-grant universities most often laud the Land-Grant Act as the embodiment of America's foundational values and promises despite increasing public pressure to confront and recognize the harmful legacy of the legislation. For colleges and universities like the University of Minnesota to be authentic champions of inclusion and equity on their campuses, these institutions need to acknowledge their harmful legacies and develop strategies to ensure past harm is never repeated.

For other public land-grant universities looking to address their own dark histories, there are several key considerations that can inform strategy and decision making. First, addressing past harm is a prerequisite to modern day DEI initiatives. Rather than pushing the wrongdoing under the rug, universities should bring their legacy issues into the light of day, address them, discuss them, and use them as a springboard for future recognition work. This ensures that DEI initiatives are rooted in truth and authenticity. Additionally, higher education institutions share the memory of violence, theft, and bloodshed with American Indians--omitting American Indian voices in legacy recognition work is not an option. Consultation and active listening are necessary to make sure both parties are aligned on a path

forward--together. Consultation also ensures that American Indian voices, experiences, and emotions are centered and respected in this work. It's also important to remember that the land-grant legacy issue is one that has been ignored for generations--making up for it might take just as long, if not longer. Legacy recognition work requires an ongoing commitment to justice, and an understanding that this work is never truly done. Universities should think less about how to check "legacy recognition" off the DEI "to-do list" and more about how they can weave it into the fabric of their campus culture.

While a problematic founding is a shared issue among all public land-grant universities, the purpose of this paper is not meant to suggest a "copy and paste" solution. There are situational differences between each university and the tribes they've harmed. Because of these variances, the theory of Corporate Historical Responsibility is a helpful framework because it provides enough direction to be useful but leaves room for nuance and complexity. It should also be noted that case studies of Corporate Historical Responsibility often read as if the organization's ultimate solution was obvious from the very beginning and was easy to achieve. However, this is hardly the case. While this paper suggests a phased strategy rooted in Corporate Historical Responsibility, the author recognizes that solving a deeply personal, multi-generational issue will not be so straightforward as the phases of this project might suggest. Communicators need to expect challenges (like conflicting opinions) and obstacles (like a lack of trust) to impact the timeliness of this work. What is presented in this project are merely suggested approaches to this issue based on what was revealed in secondary research and personal interviews. Adaptability and responsiveness to feedback will be a critical component of long-term success.

Related to, but outside the scope of this communications strategy, is the Landback movement, which seeks to reclaim American Indian control over land historically belonging to them (LANDBACK, 2021). In fact, the University of Minnesota's Forestry Center in Cloquet, which was built within the borders of the Fond du Lac Reservation in the early 1900's, is already a hotspot for landback discussions (Faircloth, 2021). By updating a historical narrative that acknowledges theft and mass displacement, the

University of Minnesota is opening itself up to further denouncement from the Landback movement and their “land defenders”. While communications can play a role in responding to Landback demands or criticism, it is ultimately university policy and decision making that will determine how this issue is handled. Hopefully, by building relationships and trust with tribal leadership, the University of Minnesota can develop solutions to the Landback demands that work for both the tribes and the university.

Publicly admitting to the violence that supported the establishment of land-grant universities is virtually unprecedented, and it might be easy for some readers to think that legacy recognition will never happen. It’s true that a Corporate Historical Responsibility approach demands honesty and vulnerability from organizations, but the United States is in the midst of a cultural shift where people are demanding institutions tell the truth. As more and more public land-grant universities admit to past harm, more American Indian students will feel seen and supported and Tribal Leadership will be respected members of the learning community. When American Indian students are visible and Tribals leadership are engaged in decision-making, universities take steps closer to creating equity in learning--opening doors for more people to pursue higher-education and achieve in life, which--after all--is what the Land-Grant Act set out to achieve nearly 170 years ago.

References

Ahtone, T., & Lee, R. (2020, May 11). *Opinion | Native Americans Paid for America's Land-Grant Universities*. The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/07/opinion/land-grant-universities-native-americans.html

American Indian Advisory Committee. (2019, October 4). Student Life. https://students.morris.umn.edu/equity-diversity-intercultural-programs/programs/native-american-student-life/american-indian

American Indian Tuition Waiver: Morris. (2020). Morris Campus Policy American Indian Tuition Waiver: Morris. https://policy.umn.edu/morris/amindianwaiver

American Indian/Alaska Native - The Office of Minority Health. (2017). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Office of Minority Health. https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=3&lvlid=62#:%7E:text=This%20racial%20group%20comprises%201.7,reservations%20or%20other%20trust%20lands.

Beal, B. D. (2013). Corporate Social Responsibility: Definition, Core Issues, and Recent Developments (1st ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Brown, R. E. (2008). Sea change: Santa Barbara and the eruption of corporate social responsibility. *Public Relations Review*, *34*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2007.08.003

Carroll, A. B. (1999). Corporate Social Responsibility. *Business & Society*, *38*(3), 268–295. https://doi.org/10.1177/000765039903800303

Decades-old tuition waiver impacts University of Minnesota students. (2018, October 7). The Minnesota Daily. https://mndaily.com/205021/uncategorized/ftwaiver/

Endowment Update. (2021, March 31). University of Minnesota Foundation. https://give.umn.edu/about-umf/financial/endowment

Faircloth, R. (2021, April 4). *U confronts troubled history with tribal nations*. Star Tribune. https://www.startribune.com/land-seizures-unethical-research-university-of-minnesota-confronts-troubled-history-with-tribal-nati/600041972/

First Nations Development Institute. (2013). *American Indian Leadership Strengthening Native Communities and Organizations*. https://www.firstnations.org/wp-content/uploads/publication-attachments/American-Indian-Leadership_0.pdf

Gavazzi, S. M. (2020, April 20). *The Original Sin of Our Nation's First Public Universities*. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/stephengavazzi/2020/04/20/the-original-sin-of-our-nations-first-public-universities/?sh=69379c0678e4

Gregory, M. (2020, September 28). *Mindful of a Harmful Past, One College Supports Native Students*. Sierra Club. https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/mindful-harmful-past-one-college-supports-native-students

HESAPA. (n.d.). LANDBACK. Retrieved June 23, 2021, from https://landback.org/hesapa/

Huber, D. (2020, March 18). *U. Minnesota-Twin Cities to formally recognize it sits on Native American land*. The College Fix. https://www.thecollegefix.com/u-minnesota-twin-cities-to-formally-recognize-it-sits-on-native-american-land/

Janssen, C. I. (2013). Corporate Historical Responsibility (CHR): Addressing a Corporate Past of Forced Labor at Volkswagen. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *41*(1), 64–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/00909882.2012.731698

Kaul, G. (2018, October 10). *Across a range of measures, Minnesota's American Indians fare worse than other groups. So why isn't ...* MinnPost. https://www.minnpost.com/politics-policy/2018/10/across-a-range-of-measures-minnesotas-american-indians-fare-worse-than-other-groups-so-why-isnt-it-talked-about-more/

LaFever, M. (2011). Empowering native americans: communication, planning, and dialogue for eco-tourism in gallup, new mexico. *Journal of international and intercultural communication*, *4*(2), 127-145.

Land Acknowledgement: Native American and Indigenous Initiatives - Northwestern University. (2020). Northwestern University. https://www.northwestern.edu/native-american-and-indigenous-peoples/about/Land%20Acknowledgement.html

Land Acknowledgment. (2020, November 5). Academics. https://www.d.umn.edu/about-umd/campus-history/land

Lee, R., & Ahtone, T. (2020, March 30). *Land-grab universities*. High Country News. https://www.hcn.org/issues/52.4/indigenous-affairs-education-land-grab-universities

Recognizing. (2021). In *Merriam-Webster*. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/recognizing

Reconcile. (2021). In Merriam-Webster. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reconciling

Machtig, A. (2021, March 11). *UMN creates new position to advise on American Indian affairs and tribal relations*. The Minnesota Daily. https://mndaily.com/266287/news/umn-creates-new-position-to-advise-on-american-indian-affairs-and-tribal-relations/

Most, B. (2020, October 20). *Weisman Art Museum faces criticism after delaying repatriation of Native American objects for 30 years*. The Minnesota Daily. https://mndaily.com/263187/news/weisman-art-museum-faces-criticism-after-delaying-repatriation-of-native-american-objects-for-30-years/

Minnesota American Indian Council. (2020, July 8). *Minnesota Indian Affairs Council Seeks Immediate Action from University of Minnesota to Address Exploitation of American Indian Nations and People* [Press release]. https://mn.gov/indianaffairs/documents/MIAC%20U%20of%20M%20Resolutions%20Release%20-%20FINAL.pdf

Pember, M. A. (2019, March 8). *The Traumatic Legacy of Indian Boarding Schools*. The Atlantic. https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/03/traumatic-legacy-indian-boarding-schools/584293/

Phillips, R., Schrempf-Stirling, J., & Stutz, C. (2019). The Past, History, and Corporate Social Responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *166*(2), 203–213. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04319-0

Rademacher, N., & Miettinen, D. (2021, March 16). *UMN plans to formally recognize campus placement on Indigenous land*. The Minnesota Daily. https://mndaily.com/193704/news/ftlandacknowledgement/

Schrempf-Stirling, J., Palazzo, G., & Phillips, R. A. (2016). Historic Corporate Social Responsibility. *Academy of Management Review*, *41*(4), 700–719. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2014.0137

Spiliotis, S. (2007). Corporate Responsibility and Historical Injustice. In J. Keane (Ed.), *Civil Society: Berlin Perspectives* (1st ed., pp. 51–70). Berghahn Books.

Ulmer, R. R., & Sellnow, T. L. (2002). Crisis management and the discourse of renewal: understanding the potential for positive outcomes of crisis. *Public Relations Review*, *28*(4), 361–365. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0363-8111(02)00165-0

University of Minnesota. (2021). *Board of Regents*. https://regents.umn.edu/

University of Minnesota Board of Regents. (2008). Board of Regents Policy: Mission Statement. University of Minnesota Policy Statements. Published. https://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/2019-09/policy_mission_statement.pdf

University of Minnesota. (2021). Official Enrollment Statistics | OIR. Office of Institutional Research. https://oir.umn.edu/student/enrollment

University of Minnesota. (2021). *University of Minnesota: Employee Headcount Data | OIR*. Office of Institutional Research. https://oir.umn.edu/hr/employee-count

University Relations News Service. (2019, November 20). U of M names first senior director of American Indian Tribal Nations Relations. University of Minnesota. https://twin-cities.umn.edu/news-events/u-m-names-first-senior-director-american-indian-tribal-nations-relations

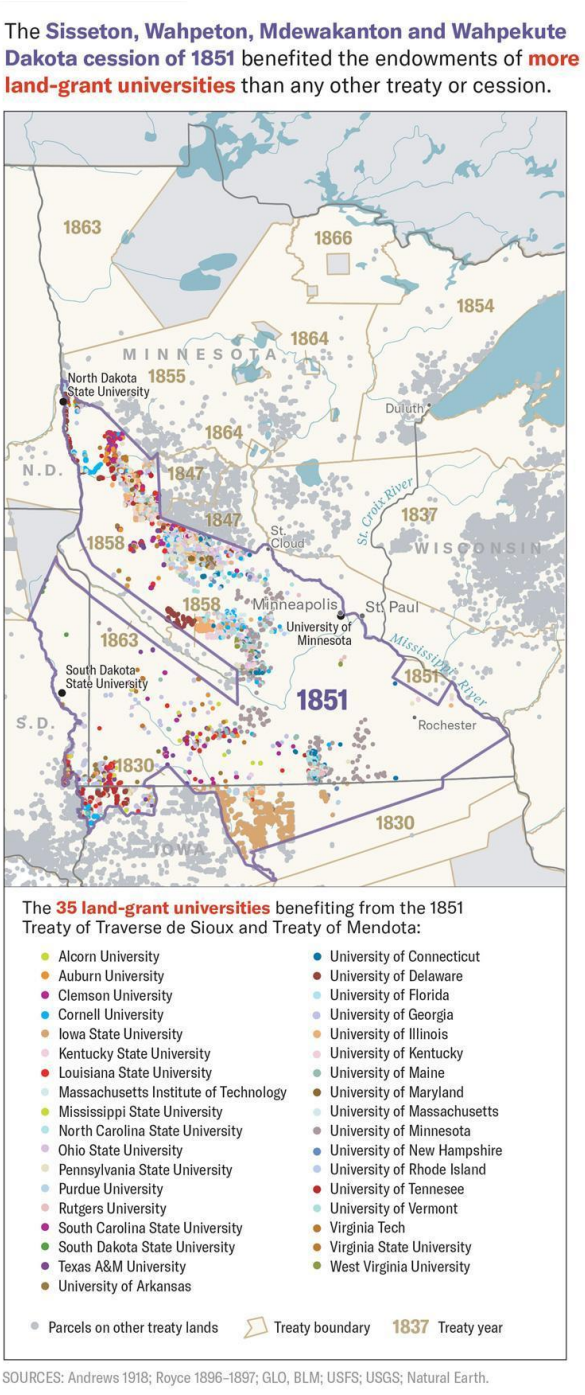
University Relations News Service. (2021, January 13). University of Minnesota receives $5M grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for racial justice in higher education [Press release]. https://twin-cities.umn.edu/news-events/university-minnesota-receives-5m-grant-andrew-w-mellon-foundation-racial-justice-higher

van der Meer, T. G. L. A., & Jonkman, J. G. F. (2021). Politicization of corporations and their environment: Corporations' social license to operate in a polarized and mediatized society. *Public Relations Review*, *47*(1), 101988. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2020.101988

Veil, S. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Heald, M. (2011). Memorializing Crisis: The Oklahoma City National Memorial as Renewal Discourse. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *39*(2), 164–183. https://doi.org/10.1080/00909882.2011.557390

Veith, D. (2014, January 29). Tribal Communication: Evolving Expectations in the Field of Sign Language Interpreting. StreetLeverage. https://streetleverage.com/2014/01/tribal-communication-evolving-expectations-in-the-field-of-sign-language-interpreting/

Appendix A: Land Cessions of Minnesota That Benefited Land-grant Universities



Used with permission from [High Country News](#) (Margaret Pearce, 2020)

Appendix B: U of MN About Us Web Pages

History

The University of Minnesota traces its origins to 1851, seven years before Minnesota became a state. Nearly 170 years later the U of M has grown to become one of the preeminent public research universities in the nation.

On this page:

- 1851-1900: The Early Years
- 1901-1960: The Campus Takes Shape
- 1961-2000: Growth and Innovation
- 2001-present: The Next Frontier
- Notable Alumni
- Historical Resources

1851-1900: The Early Years

1851	Minnesota Territorial Legislature and Gov. Alexander Ramsey charter the University of Minnesota and elect a board of regents, seven years before Minnesota becomes a state.
1858	Old Main, the U of M's first permanent building, is erected on the Historic Knoll Area of campus.
1861	The University temporarily closes during the Civil War.
1862	Morrill Land-Grant Colleges Act signed, establishing federal land-grant resources for schools that teach and research agriculture and mechanic arts.
1868	Regent John Sargent Pillsbury reopens Old Main and the U of M resumes operations.
1873	Warren Clark Eustis and Henry Martyn Williamson are the first graduates.
1875	Helen Marr Ely is the first female graduate.
1877	Maria Sanford is hired as the first woman professor.
1880	First master's degree awarded.
1881	Sale of agricultural land in Minneapolis and acquisition of land in St. Paul for the U's experimental farm.
1887	Hatch Act launches nation's agricultural experiment stations, supporting research as a primary mission of U's College of Agriculture.

UMN - Twin Cities About Us - History Page *(University of Minnesota, n.d.)*

ABOUT

» Mission & Vision
Campus History
National Rankings
Native American Student Life
» Organizational Structure and Campus Governance
» Policies & Administration
Student Achievement Data
Student Learning Outcomes
» Institutional Effectiveness and Research
» Accreditation
» Visitor Information
Contact Us

A UNIQUE CAMPUS HISTORY

Morris Campus: Educational Experiments in Three Acts

Act I: American Indian Boarding School, 1887–1909

The University of Minnesota Morris makes its home on lands first inhabited by the Anishinaabe and Dakota/Lakota people. The first campus buildings housed an American Indian boarding school, first administered by the Sisters of Mercy order of the Catholic Church and later by the United States Government. The school closed in 1909, and the campus was transferred to the State of Minnesota with the stipulation that American Indian students "shall at all times be admitted to such school free of charge for tuition," a policy still proudly honored.

Act II: West Central School of Agriculture, 1910–63

In 1910 the University of Minnesota established the West Central School of Agriculture (WCSA) on the Morris campus, which educated area high school students in a boarding school environment until 1963. It is this time period that garnered the campus its placement on the National Register of Historic Places as the West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station Historic District. Handsome Prairie School structures, such as Behmler Hall and the Education building, built during the WCSA years and designed by well known state architect Clarence H. Johnston, Sr., continue to serve the campus well.

Act III: University of Minnesota Morris, 1960–present

In the late 1950s when the University of Minnesota announced that agricultural schools would be phased out, a grassroots citizens movement convinced the Minnesota Legislature that creating a distinct public liberal arts college within the University of Minnesota System on the Morris campus would be a good investment for the state.

In September 1960 the University of Minnesota Morris opened its doors and began fulfilling its institutional vision to be an affordable, undergraduate, intentionally small, residential, public liberal arts college.

With an enrollment of approximately 1,500, the campus attracts students from 32 states and 23 countries.

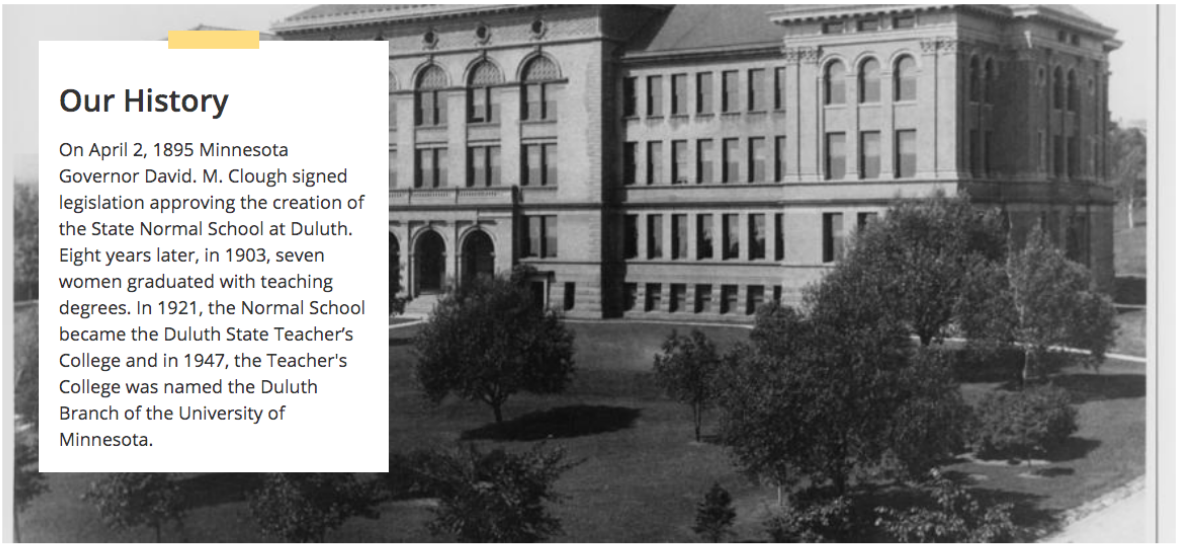
The "Morris experience" emphasizes faculty/student collaborative research, study abroad opportunities, and service learning.

UMN Morris is a national leader in green initiatives—wind energy, biomass energy, Pride of the Prairie local, sustainable food projects. Its goal is to be a carbon-neutral campus.

In 2020 the University of Minnesota Morris celebrates its 60-year anniversary and marks the 110-year anniversary of the opening of the West Central School of Agriculture.

UMN - Morris About Us - History Page *(University of Minnesota, n.d.)*

Campus History



The University of Minnesota Duluth's Land Acknowledgment

We collectively acknowledge that the University of Minnesota Duluth is located on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of Indigenous people. The University resides on land that was cared for and called home by the Ojibwe people, before them the Dakota and Northern Cheyenne people, and other Native peoples from time immemorial. Ceded by the Ojibwe in an 1854 treaty, this land holds great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for its original stewards, the Native nations and peoples of this region. We recognize and continually support and advocate for the sovereignty of the Native nations in this territory and beyond. By offering this land acknowledgment, we affirm tribal sovereignty and will work to hold the University of Minnesota Duluth accountable to American Indian peoples and nations.

UMN - Duluth About Us - History Page *(University of Minnesota, n.d.)*

Appendix C: The University of Minnesota Duluth's Land Acknowledgment

The University of Minnesota Duluth's Land Acknowledgment

We collectively acknowledge that the University of Minnesota Duluth is located on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of Indigenous people. The University resides on land that was cared for and called home by the Ojibwe people, before them the Dakota and Northern Cheyenne people, and other Native peoples from time immemorial. Ceded by the Ojibwe in an 1854 treaty, this land holds great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for its original stewards, the Native nations and peoples of this region. We recognize and continually support and advocate for the sovereignty of the Native nations in this territory and beyond. By offering this land acknowledgment, we affirm tribal sovereignty and will work to hold the University of Minnesota Duluth accountable to American Indian peoples and nations.

Context

A Land Acknowledgment is a formal recognition of the unique and enduring relationship that exists between American Indians and their territories. This acknowledgment is an opportunity for the entire University community to increase their awareness of the history of the land on which UMD resides.

George Morrison (Grand Portage Ojibwe, 1919-2000) "Witch Tree Variation," 1988 Colored pencil on paper Collection Tweed Museum of Art, UMD Alice Tweed Tuohy Purchase Fund D91.d8

We recognize the land as an expression of gratitude and appreciation. It is important for each of us to understand the long-standing history that has brought us to reside on the land and to seek to understand our place within that history. This acknowledgment centers on the 1854 Treaty, in which the land that the University resides on was ceded to the US by the Anishinaabeg/Ojibwe/Chippewa but we also recognize that this land had a long and dynamic history prior to the treaty.

In addition, when the Anishinaabeg ceded the land, they also kept some land for reservations as well as a number of specific rights to the ceded territory and maintain an ongoing relationship with those lands. Today the 1854 Treaty Authority manages the off-reservation hunting, fishing, and gathering rights of the Bois Forte Band and the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in the lands ceded in the 1854 Treaty.

The U.S. and American Indian nations continue to have a unique government-to-government political relationship. For example, Minnesota Executive Order 19-24 recognizes and supports "the unique

status of the Minnesota Tribal Nations and their right to existence, self-govern, and possess self-determination."

There are many Indigenous peoples who reside on the lands of the 1854 Treaty today. Land acknowledgments do not exist in a past tense or historical context: colonialism is a current ongoing process, and we need to build the mindfulness of our present participation. It is also worth noting that acknowledging the land is rooted in Indigenous protocol practices.

The University of Minnesota Duluth's Land Acknowledgment was crafted via collaborative process with our Department of American Indian Studies, the Campus Climate Leadership Team, Campus Climate Change Team, participants at the 2019 Summit on Equity, Race, & Ethnicity, and endorsed by the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council on June 4, 2019. The acknowledgment has been approved by Chancellor Black. Within the acknowledgment, "we" is defined as our institution of higher learning and those who participate in and contribute to the UMD campus climate including students, alumni, staff, faculty, and administration.